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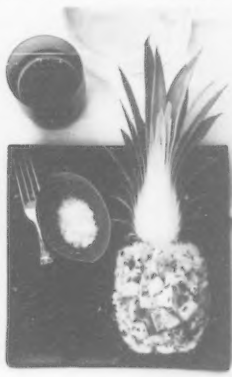
EXPOSURE TO LIGHT

SPECIAL REPORT: PHOTOJOURNALISM NOW





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JULY/AUGUST 2002

"To assess the performance of journalism . . . to help stimulate continuing improvement in the profession, and to speak out for what is right, fair, and decent" —From the founding editorial, 1961

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Now that's a great quote. As publishers of the San Jose Mercury News we couldn't be prouder of what the judges of this year's "Best of Newspaper Design" competition had to say about our paper. It was named one of the five best-designed newspapers in the world by the Society for News Design.

Likened to a "Pulitzer Prize" for visual journalism, the "World's Best-Designed" award was the top honor in the 23rd annual event, sponsored by the SND and Syracuse University.

The Mercury News was also honored with 14 awards, including gold and silver medals for its coverage of the September 11 attacks, ranking second only to The New York Times in number of awards for such coverage.

Being the boldest isn't just a measure of the way this paper looks. It's also fundamentally characteristic of how the Mercury News works. The latest proof: creating the nation's first race and demographics department.

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We're pleased for everyone at the Mercury News for all the honors won in the SND competition, especially being recognized as America's boldest paper.

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LETTERS

PARADOXICAL PRIZE

I was struck, as were many around the country's newsrooms, by the historic concentration of Pulitzers in the dominant, largest newspapers this year ("The Pulitzer Gap," CJR, May/June). But among the valid questions you raise, the one I did not see is whether in fact all this concern is relevant to the broader American society and whether indeed that has a message for American journalism. Does anyone outside of newsrooms really care? The issue of Pulitzer concentration vs. readership, for instance, was not raised. How have the ten Pulitzer-dominant newspapers over the past decade fared in their markets vs. the penetration leaders, for instance? What are the ingredients that define market leaders around the country?

As devoted as I am to *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Wall Street Journal*, I suspect that if we allow readers (true democratic juries) to vote for newspapers, we may find that they would define excellence in journalism in different ways. And I wonder if the real message in this concentration of Pulitzer wealth isn't that the rich get richer and read by fewer and fewer.

ROBERTO FABRICIO
Key Biscayne, Florida

About "The Pulitzer Gap": The pickers looked down their noses at the *New York Post* even before Rupert Murdoch bought it. Murray Kempton wrote brilliant columns there

for years and they ignored him. Then he went to *Newsday*, did the same thing, and got a Pulitzer in about five minutes.

ALAN WHITNEY
New York

MISSING PARTS

Your illuminating story on the new *L.A. Times* (CJR, May/June) had omissions sadly typical of such pieces. There was not a word about the sports sections, photogra-

phy, or copy editing, and a mere half-sentence about page design. The aforementioned are essential to most readers of a general-interest newspaper, yet one might conclude from your article that they never cross the minds of the *Times*'s new management.

ALEX CRUDEN
Detroit, Michigan

MY OX OR YOURS?

So, Chicago journalists are concerned about their police department's new press credentialing system (CJR, May/June), fearing that fingerprinting and background checks will unnecessarily put their fate into the hands of the police, violate their privacy and the First Amendment, and be a tool that can be used against them in the future. Imagine that.

Those are arguments used by the so-called gun-rights organizations — substituting, of course, the Second for the

First Amendment — with little success in the media. Now that the shoe is being put on the other foot, it may be hard for the National Rifle Association, et al., to not say, "We told you so."

WILLIAM J. DURR
Cornwallville, New York

MIND GAMES

In an otherwise fine piece on Robert Caro and the writing of *Master of the Senate*, Scott Sherman suddenly turns literary critic when he states: "As a prose stylist, Caro is not in the same class as Garry Wills, Norman Mailer, Gay Talese, Robert Hughes, or Marshall Frady." What an odd assortment of writers with whom to compare Caro as a prose stylist! An essayist, a novelist, a journalist, a cultural commentator and, yes, another biographer. How would you compare either of them with each other from the standpoint of the use of the English language? While he's at it, why doesn't Sherman throw in Annie Dillard and V.S. Naipaul for comparison?

Sherman does get more specific when he compares *Master of the Senate* with Frady's recent biography of Jesse Jackson, noting that "it helps to illuminate Caro's shortcomings." Frady, after spending years interviewing and observing Jackson, got to know his man and, according to Sherman, his "novelistic sense of character enables him to see more — and delve deeper — into his subject." Caro, says Sherman, "prefers the archives." Too bad for Caro that his subject was dead.

MATT CLARK
New York, New York



Scott Sherman replies: My point is that Marshall Frady's biography provides a complex psychological portrait of Jesse Jackson, while Caro gives us a mostly one-dimensional depiction of Lyndon B. Johnson. In a striking admission, Caro told *The Washington Post* on April 25 that he shied away from "getting into the mind of Johnson." But how else can a biographer fully understand his or her subject, regardless of whether or not that person is deceased?

UNPEACHY BEHAVIOR

I gather from the caption "Pie Eyed?" on the photo that accompanied the article "The Lomborg File" in your March/April issue that you were amused by the fact that some clown, identified as a journalist, threw a pie at Lomborg.

You should be ashamed of yourself! There's nothing funny about that sort of outrageous behavior, much less by a so-called journalist. CJR should be condemning such behavior.

NICHOLAS KOMINUS
Springfield, Virginia

FACTS AND FEUDS

In his May/June profile of Christopher Hitchens, John Giuffo quotes Hitchens as saying that I got "the facts and figures wrong" about the bombing of the al-Shifa plant in the Sudan, and misattributed the estimate to Human Rights Watch. In my book, *9/11*, I have quoted the HRW statement along with all other relevant sources I could locate precisely and accurately. Well aware of that, Hitchens carefully avoids my sole discussion in print and refers instead to a few words in a phone interview posted on a Web site (*Salon*, January 16).

The attribution to me of a comparison between the 9/11 atrocities and the U.S. bombing of the al-Shifa plant is false.

Here are the facts. In my book, I described the atrocities

of 9/11 as "horrendous crimes" committed with "wickedness and awesome cruelty." I then added the important fact that what was unique about these horrendous crimes, regrettably, was not the toll, citing one minor example — the al-Shifa bombing, which, according to the few reputable analyses, left tens of thousands dead. Period. What Hitchens describes as "a very vulgar, arithmetical, pragmatic war of arguing" is a brief mention of highly relevant facts that he doesn't like, with no further comparison apart from his fevered imagination.

That "very vulgar, arithmetical" comparison is outrageous only if we adopt the view that Africans are "mere things," whose lives have "no value," as Hegel put it. Is that attitude, and the policies that follow from it, comparable to the purposeful murder of thousands of people on 9/11? An interesting question, worth pursuing, but only in some serious context.

Giuffo's description of my disagreement with Hitchens "over the use of force to stop Slobodan Milosevic from moving forward with a second campaign of ethnic cleansing" is also inaccurate. I have written about the topic, never mentioning Hitchens, and reviewing the extensive evidence from official Western sources indicating that the use of force, as was anticipated, led to a sharp escalation of crimes.

NOAM CHOMSKY
Lexington, Massachusetts

For many of us on the so-called "left" our beef with Christopher Hitchens is not principled disagreements over U.S. foreign policy. It's about opportunism and selling one's soul for a buck.

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We object not to Hitchens having a different point of view on the roots of the war in Afghanistan. We object to Hitchens's neo-McCarthyite characterization of those like Noam Chomsky as somehow anti-American as he heaps praise on unprincipled creeps like David Horowitz and others on the right.

The difference, of course, is that the now former socialist Hitchens has reaped a financial reward by making war with the left and love with the far right and their far-flung media empire, where Hitchens's morose, Clinton-hating book, *No One Left to Lie To*, has been energetically promoted.

That Giuffo even mentions Hitchens's name with the late great I.F. Stone makes me puke. Can you imagine Stone as a critic for a far-right rag like *American Spectator*?

JACK MCCARTHY
Tallahassee, Florida

John Giuffo responds: Regarding Chomsky's claim that Hitchens has falsely attributed to him a comparison between 9/11 and al-Shifa, readers are referred to the following passage, which appears on pages 45 and 46 of Chomsky's book, 9/11: "I mentioned that the toll of the 'horrendous crime' of 9/11, committed with 'wickedness and awesome cruelty' (quoting Robert Fisk), may be comparable to the consequences of Clinton's bombing of the al-Shifa plant in August 1998."

WHAT 'IDENTITY CRISIS'?

In the May/June issue, CJR gave a Dart to the *Daily Inter-Lake* for running a guest

Who

fought for a quality education for their children?

Who

went to jail in order to ride the public buses?

Who

changed the law to gain access to the vote?

Who

has created more change in America than any other group in the last 2 decades?

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opinion proposing a four-day work stoppage in an unsigned protest against the Endangered Species Act [and in support of "the eviction of all illegal undocumented persons in America"]. CIR did not bother to contact us for an explanation of why the column was run, nor did you present the facts objectively.

CIR writes that "the sole clue to the source of this harangue was the disembodied byline 'SierraTimes.com.' Not until ten days later, via a published letter from Christine Kaufmann, the research and policy director for the Montana Human Rights Network in Helena, were readers informed that SierraTimes.com is the voice of J.J. Johnson, a leader of the national militia movement at the time of the Oklahoma City terrorist bombing."

The complaint about the "disembodied byline," is ridiculous on the face of it. It would have been absurd to attribute the column in question to J.J. Johnson when in fact it was an unsigned opinion. And if we were to inform our readers about J.J. Johnson's ownership of SierraTimes.com as part of our decision to run the column, we would also need to inform our readers about who owns *The New York Times* prior to running an editorial from their pages. After all, in the view of CIR, ownership is more important than argument when judging the validity of an opinion. We disagree, and we think that the SierraTimes.com byline was actually much more informative than many bylines because all of our readers had the opportunity to visit the Web site for themselves if they had any questions about the source of the commentary.

Although Johnson is not a member of our northwest Montana community, the guest column was particularly relevant to our readers because Operation: Restore the

Eagle, as it was known, was a joint venture between SierraTimes.com and a local Kalispell radio station, KGEZ. It was that local radio station's status as a co-sponsor of the proposed work stoppage that led to the column appearing on the *InterLake's* editorial page, not the seven-year-old militia ties of J.J. Johnson.

We did not necessarily agree with the opinions in the guest column. We never said we did. Nor do we necessarily agree with the opinions of *The Washington Post* or *The New York Times* when we run a guest column from their editorial pages. However, we do remain confident that our readers are sophisticated enough and well educated enough to be able to judge each on its own merits and from its own individual perspectives.

FRANK MIELE
Managing editor
Daily InterLake
Kalispell, Montana

POLL JUMPING

In his March/April column, Andrew Kohut argues "The Problem with that assumption [of liberal media bias] is that for most Americans political bias in the media is not partisan or ideological. While a small percentage of the public thinks news organizations favor the liberals, almost as many think the press is biased in favor of the conservatives; and a larger percentage see no ideological or partisan pattern in political bias."

Kohut's theory is interesting, but he seems to back it up with a willful misreading of polling data. If he took the time to go to his own Web site (people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=29), he'd find the following headline: MEDIA SEEN AS FAIR, BUT TILTING TO GORE. It refers to a survey of registered voters a month before the last election. Fifty-

four percent of those who follow news very closely felt journalists tilted toward Gore, about the same percentage that found a pro-Democrat tilt in 1992 (52 percent) and in 1996 (59 percent).

The survey included other interesting findings: while three-quarters of Democrats thought coverage of Gore was fair, only 48 percent of Republicans thought coverage of Bush was fair. By 2 to 1, all respondents thought the media were pulling for Gore. Republicans agreed 67 to 12. Independents agreed 44 to 28. Even Democrats were more likely to say the media pulled for Gore than that the media pulled for Bush, 36 to 30. The percentage seeing no tilt was 6 percent for all respondents, 2 percent for Republicans, 8 percent for Democrats, and 4 percent for Independents.

If these numbers are accurate then the press does have a serious problem. Columns that pretend the problem doesn't exist may make journalists feel better, but they won't make the widespread perception of bias go away.

DAVID MASTIO
Editorial writer
USA Today
McLean, Virginia

CLARIFICATION

In the May/June issue, a Dart went to *The New York Times* and Joel Greenberg for a page-one report on a protest by some Israeli reservists against serving in the West Bank. The report, which noted the powerful impact of a resistance movement among Israeli reservists against service in Lebanon in the 1980s, failed to disclose Greenberg's own history as an Israeli soldier who had gone to jail rather than serve a second term in Lebanon. The Dart did not mean to suggest that at that time Greenberg had been a journalist; in fact, he had been a graduate student.

ROLE MODEL

FLORA LEWIS: REPORTER

BY TERENCE SMITH

The date was June 4, 1967, the eve of the Six Day War between Israel and her Arab neighbors. It took no special genius to know that war was looming. Egypt's Nasser had closed the vital straits of Tiran, choking off Israel's access to the Red Sea, and ordered United Nations observers out of the Gaza Strip. The stage was set for the war that would redraw the map of the Middle East. But none of us stationed in the area on that hot, dry Sunday knew that it would begin the next morning.

Flora Lewis, who was writ-

ing a syndicated column then for *Newsday*, was on a reporting trip in Amman, Jordan. Instinctively, she knew that Israel was going to be the center of action. The only way to get from Amman to Jerusalem in those days was a hazardous road trip down a winding road to the Allenby Bridge, across the River Jordan, and up the treeless Judean Hills to the Mandelbaum gate, which straddled the no-man's-land between the Jordanian eastern part of the city and the Israeli western portion. Technically, the two nations had been in a state of war since 1948.

The gate — a ramshackle affair of corrugated tin check-

points separated on each side by a wide, cobblestone expanse of street — was used by U.N. personnel and diplomats. They would drive through one checkpoint, get out and change their license plates, and continue through the other. No one else was permitted to drive through, but journalists and others with valid visas were allowed to make the trip one-way, either way, under their own steam.

I had recently arrived in Jerusalem as a correspondent for *The New York Times*. Through Mayor Teddy Kollek's office, I got word that Flora was trying to transit the gate Sunday evening, shortly before its scheduled 8 p.m. closing. I decided to go meet her.

Flora had set out alone by taxi from Amman and, with



1922-2002

just minutes to go before the gate would close for the night, got her papers cleared at the Jordanian checkpoint. The taxi could go no further, so Flora picked up her two heavy bags and set off across the exposed no-man's land.

Pulling up in my car on the Israeli side, I could see this determined figure trudging across the pavement. No one else was in sight, except

continued on page 9

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FIRST PERSON

THE DILEMMA

At the office, a spokesman for Israel; in the classroom, a journalist learning to question everything; in the drawer, a bottle of whisky

BY LIEL LEIBOVITZ

Over my desk at the Department of Media and Public Affairs at the Consulate General of Israel in New York hung a cartoon I'd clipped from *The New Yorker*. It featured an ox, his eyes agog, his tongue sticking out of his mouth at an impossible angle. Below him, in black letters, it said, "oxymoron." I put that picture there realizing that I, too, was an oxymoron: a spokesman by day and a journalist by night, a left-winger preaching the gospel of Ariel Sharon's right-wing government. The same day I put up the cartoon, I put a bottle of Ballantine's in my drawer. A double life requires a potent elixir.

Two years earlier, in October 1999, I had arrived in New York from Israel with a plethora of dreams, some money, and no clue. The plan I quickly concocted was simple: get into journalism school, find a job to pay the rent. I was lucky enough to secure both, but doomed to pay a price I didn't understand at the time.

Having served in the Israeli army as a non-commissioned officer in the spokesman's unit, I managed to get a position as a press officer at the Israeli Consulate, a diplomatic job with its prestige and perks



Leibovitz: Choices

(free parking in Manhattan!). Showing me around my spacious new office, my boss, a wiry man with hair like a Brillo pad, barked out the job description: "Journalists call, you tell them whatever you need to. Show them Israel with a human face. Toe the party line. Tell the truth when possible. Good luck."

It soon seemed to me, however, that more than luck was needed. The job required me to be dogmatic, preaching the gospel of the foreign ministry. The journalism I was struggling to learn at Columbia University, on the other hand, required me to be relentless in my pursuit of fairness and balance.

In addition, I had my own personal politics as an Israeli citizen to reckon with, adding additional ambiguity to this mix. One thing that placated me was that Israel's government, then headed by Ehud

Barak, seemed determined to make peace with the Palestinian Authority. In July 2000, when the summit in Camp David was announced, I bought myself a little notebook; I needed, so I thought, to write all of this down, to document this great moment in my country's history.

And then it all went to hell.

The summit failed, a result of misguided Israeli zeal to end an age-old conflict instantaneously, and of Palestinian reluctance to grasp real opportunities through a veil of demagoguery. The Palestinians, thus, prepared for an armed conflict, killing an Israeli soldier in the Gaza strip in September even before the official beginning of the Intifada. Ariel Sharon, then the leader of the Israeli opposition, added fuel to the fire with his ill-conceived visit to the Temple Mount. Violence escalated, the framework of the peace accords rapidly crumbling with every Palestinian suicide bomber and every Israeli military incursion into Palestinian territory. In February 2001, Barak lost his seat to Sharon, who was for years a pariah to members of the Israeli left, myself included. Gradually, the daily briefings and talking points sent by the ministry in Jerusalem began addressing not peace but retribution, not coexistence but conflict.

My increasingly hectic work schedule, meanwhile, clashed with my newly minted position as a student of journalism, and other, more significant, clashes soon followed. Shortly after the current round of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict began, I accompanied my boss to a presentation at the very school I was attending. It was a class taught by a renowned correspondent and editor focusing on covering international conflicts. My boss stood and spoke of Israel's moral superiority. Standing in the back of the room, I examined the faces of the students, my more seasoned classmates. They were smiling those little disdainful smiles that journalists, as I later came to know, reserve for anybody trying to sell them a particular version of the truth. The students wasted no time in trying to rip my boss apart: Why was Israel still present in Palestinian territories? Why does Israel still allow the building of settlements? My boss had answers, clinging fiercely to the party line. I, however, felt lightheaded: I wanted so much to be like them, the hard-driving men and women, the Woodwards and Bernsteins of the future. Instead I felt like a little Nixon. I was forced to hide one identity, that of the assiduous

journalism student, in deference to another, that of the self-assured spokesman.

It must have shown on my face. "What's the matter?" my boss asked on the way out, smiling. "Those liberals disgust you too much?"

It only got worse. At the office, journalists would call with questions, and often I would cringe. Now that I was learning the journalistic credo, I began viewing my press contacts more as colleagues than as pawns I must seduce en route to achieving my goal of favorable coverage for Israel. Unable to subject a colleague to intentional spinning, I resorted to haiku-like answers, describing the situation in the Middle East as "dire, but hopeful, if we know what to do," sounding more and more like Yoda than a serious spokesman. In school, there were discussions about the importance of objectivity, and I felt my secret identity, my own personal blue-and-white Scarlet Letter, burning my skin.

As if this dual loyalty was not enough to induce angst, there was also the matter of my political views: I could still recall my father, dusty and weary, coming back from the war in Lebanon and telling me of the horrors he'd seen, thus condemning me to a lifetime affiliation with the peace camp. It was a war largely credited to Sharon's sensibilities. How, I often wondered, could I work for that man in clear conscience? It was more than a theoretical question.

Sometimes my job required explaining the inexplicable. One afternoon, for example, the phone in my office rang. My bag was packed and I was ready to rush off to school, but instinctively I picked up the phone. On the other end was one of my contacts, a seasoned journalist working for one of the New York tabloids. "Hey," he said, "what's the deal with you guys in Gaza?" He was asking about an event earlier that day in

which five Palestinian kids, all members of the same family, died from an Israeli mine intended for Palestinian militants. I put him on hold. What do I say? Collateral damage? Unfortunate accident? Unintended tragedy? I pressed the hold button again. "Look," I told him, "It's breaking my heart. It was obviously not what the army had intended. We're fighting a war, you know..." My voice failed me; I stared at the bottle of whisky in my drawer. "Write whatever you see fit," I told him quietly. "There's nothing more I can say to you." My politics, my ideology, my views as an Israeli citizen were drilled into my arguments, and my training as a journalist forced me to examine each issue from a multitude of angles. I had lost the essential quality required of a good spokesman: single-mindedness.

I shared my views with my consulate colleagues. As the yarn goes, we were four Jews with at least twice as many opinions. One colleague, a modern Orthodox woman with a progressive ideology, chose to overlook her progressiveness as soon as the matter at hand pertained to Israel. As far as she was concerned, the Palestinian violence — the suicide bombers, the shooting attacks, the incitement — merited a forceful response, any forceful response. Another colleague, a young man straight out of college, was often swayed by events, preaching compromise one day and, in the light of some gruesome terrorist attack, advocating retaliation the next. The overall, unspoken consensus, however, seemed to be that when the phones ring, we better not question what we preach.

But a journalist is taught to question. Always. Everything. Everyone. Even superiors, especially men in positions of power.

As I grew more and more conflicted, I became detached, reading the news from Israel as if it were some nation in Asia that I knew nothing of and cared little for. I tried to limit my answers to the few and simple truths I could still mutter wholeheartedly: yes, I believed that targeting innocent civilians was morally reprehensible. I stressed that point without delving into all the politics around it, without offering my contacts — my fellow journalists — any more insight into the conflict. For me, insight meant introspection, and that was the one thing that would have imploded my triple identity, that of the spokesman, the journalist, and the human being. I was in, as they say, an untenable position.

As is the case with so many conflicts (save for the one in the Middle East), resolution was forthcoming. As I was nearing the end of my journalism studies, the three identities I had nurtured for so long demanded prioritization, demanded choice. So I handed in my notice. I would test the precarious job market.

I put the oxymoron cartoon, the bottle of Ballantine's, and other belongings in a cardboard box. I left my office like a teenager leaving his parents' home to go off on his own; nostalgia, anxiety, and remorse all flooded me in waves. But above all I felt unhindered, ready to commit myself to the journalistic endeavor, to pursue the career I always wanted, the one I believed in, without the burden of party lines and spins and talking points. I would be complete. ■

Liel Leibovitz, a former screenwriter and editor for Israeli media, served as a press officer at the Consulate General of Israel in New York from July 2000 to July 2002. He is a freelance journalist, and will begin studies for a Ph.D. in communications in September.

FLORA LEWIS

continued from page 7

the heavily armed guards on each side, all of whom were on special alert because of the tension between the two countries. All of us were watching Flora. Halfway across the open space, she set her bags down, turned around and picked them up again, the weight redistributed on fresh arms.

Finally, Flora stepped inside the Israeli checkpoint, looked at the startled guard, and said "Shalom, Shalom."

After Flora was processed, the Mandelbaum gate, the symbol of divided Jerusalem, shut down for the night. It never reopened.

At dawn the next day, Israel launched a preemptive strike against Egypt and by mid-morning, King Hussein of Jordan made his fateful decision to join the fight. In less than forty-eight hours, Israeli forces swept through the Mandelbaum gate and across the no-man's land into eastern Jerusalem. They had control of the city by June 7. One of their first acts to commemorate the unification of the city was to bring up bulldozers and obliterate the Mandelbaum gate. Nothing of it remains in place, although a plaque and a small museum nearby recalls the period when the city was divided. Flora Lewis's status as the last person ever to cross through the gate was ensured.

Great reporters have an instinct for the news, a sixth sense that often puts them in the right place at the right time. Flora, who died June 2 at the age of seventy-nine, was one of them. ■

Terence Smith, media correspondent for The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, reported from the Middle East for The New York Times for five years.

CURRENTS

IN REVIEW: AL QAEDA'S COMPUTER

BY LAWRENCE K. GROSSMAN

A recent *New York Law Journal* column by James C. Goodale, ex-chairman of the Committee to Protect Journalists, severely criticized *The Wall Street Journal* for passing along to U.S. intelligence officials hidden al Qaeda computer files it found in Kabul, and for reporting that it did so in two front-page articles. Goodale argued that the juxtaposition of those articles and the assassination of the *Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl only days later "at least raises questions to what extent, if any, the press should assist the war against terrorism." "The line between what the state does and what the press does," Goodale wrote, "should be as bright, if not brighter, than the line between church and state." It is a principle that journalists certainly would endorse, but as we shall see, is not always simple to follow.

The more than 1,750 al Qaeda computer files that came into the *Journal's* possession contained communications between the terrorist organization's leaders from 1997 to the fall of 2001 and, among other things, a remarkably detailed account of its agent Abdul Ra'uff's travels in Israel and Egypt in search of terrorist targets. Ra'uff's itinerary matched that of the would-be shoe bomber, Richard C. Reid, the British citizen whose alleged later effort to blow up an American airliner was thwarted by the passengers and crew. U.S. officials who reviewed the files are convinced that Ra'uff and Reid are the same person.

The *Journal's* exclusive articles about the al Qaeda files were written by staff reporters Alan Cullison and Andrew Higgins based on information stored in two computers that had been looted from an abandoned al Qaeda office. The computers wound up in the hands of a local dealer who sold them for \$1,100 to Cullison, who was in the market for a laptop because his own had been destroyed when a Northern Alliance truck in which he was riding overturned.

Seven days after the second *Journal* article appeared, Pearl, who had been investigating the connection between the alleged shoe bomber and al Qaeda, was kidnapped and later killed by terrorists. His assassins claimed they kidnapped him because he was a CIA agent, a claim entirely without foundation. But here's the rub. Several years ago, the CIA admitted that it used willing journalists as its agents in the cold war. Worse, the late William Colby, a CIA director, once confided to a reporter friend of mine, Stanley Karnow, that several major news organizations actually were complicit in helping the CIA plant agents posing as reporters in their overseas bureaus. To this day, the CIA has refused to make clear that it no longer uses reporters as agents or agents posing as reporters, a practice that not only endangers the credibility of the press but also puts U.S. journalists — like Pearl — at risk.

I asked the *Journal's* managing editor, Paul E. Steiger, why the newspaper decided to give government officials the computer files and go public with the fact

that it had. He said that they needed confirmation that the files were legitimate, and they hoped the government could help them get at the encrypted files more quickly, in case the files contained plans for another terrorist attack. "If we could not decode them on time and attacks were carried out successfully," Steiger said, "we could never look at ourselves in the mirror again."

Steiger said he was concerned at the time about remaining independent from the government, but not about possible retribution against his staff. "We realized the information in our possession had the potential to be very serious," he said. "We decided the risk was sufficiently great to make contacting government officials not only appropriate but also necessary." Steiger concedes that "it is possible, though extremely doubtful" that Pearl was killed because of the *Journal* stories. "More likely it was simply because he was an American and a journalist But our job is to publish what is important."

In his *Law Journal* column, Goodale concluded that *The Wall Street Journal* had no real need to share the al Qaeda files with government officials, because, like the Pentagon Papers, the files were merely dated "reference documents" indicating where al Qaeda had been and what it had done, rather than current information that could affect public safety or military operations.

After hearing Steiger's expla-

Files Found

A Computer in Kabul
Yields a Chilling Array
Of al Qaeda Memos

Talk Terror Tour

How al Qaeda Agent
Scouted Attack Sites
In Israel and Egypt

Account on Kabul Computer
Matches Travels of Reid,
The Alleged Shoe-Bomber

Photographing Tall Buildings

nation, Goodale — a former general counsel for *The New York Times* and a key supporter of its decision to publish the Pentagon Papers — did not change his mind. He e-mailed me, "If the *WSJ* was worried there might be plans in the computer they should have turned it over to the government and forgotten about it. No matter what, they should not have published that they cooperated with the government I will say flat out what the *WSJ* did is detrimental to the safety of U.S. journalists abroad."

In this case, I stand with Steiger. Concern for reporters' safety, as vital as it must be, cannot trump the need to report a critically important story. Steiger and his colleagues asked themselves the right questions and made the tough decision to publish, including the decision to reveal that government officials reviewed the material and verified its authenticity. No journalist wants to freely turn over information to the government. But the "bright line" that separates press and state can at times be terribly pale and fuzzy.

Grossman is a former president of PBS and of NBC News.



RADIO: THE ROOKIES

Some of the best journalism coming out of WNYC, New York City's public radio station, is being done by a bunch of rookies. Radio Rookies — the station's three-year-old workshop program that trains inner-city teens to report on their own lives. Listen:

Jesus Gonzales: *Is there a lot of gunshots going out like in the neighborhood? Because you live in the Bushwick community.*

Chaos: *Back in the day when I was growing up, there used to be. There was somebody getting shot every day. It calmed down, but it's getting ready to start back up again...*

Gonzales: *You know a couple of people that sell guns?*

Chaos: *I sell guns.*

Gonzales: *You sell guns?*

Chaos: *Yeah, I sell guns. I sell a lot of guns.*

— From "Guns," by Jesus Gonzalez, fifteen

Janesse Nieves: *Well, you can get clean and, you know, get other jobs.*

Janesse's dad: *You think I'm dirty?*

Janesse: *No, I don't mean... Okay, that's the wrong word. I'm sorry.*

Dad: *The way I look? The way I dress? The shirt, the pants?*

Janesse: *No, no.*

Dad: *Eh?*

Janesse: *I'm talking about you doing drugs and thinking it's okay.*

Dad: *What do you mean it's okay, thinking it's okay?*

Janesse: *I mean...*

Dad: *That's how I feel.*

— From "Heroin" by Janesse Nieves, seventeen

"These are stories you can't commission out of a newsroom," says Dean Cappello,

the vice president of programming at WNYC. And the radio world is taking notice. The rookies rake in awards, sometimes in adult categories, like the Robert F. Kennedy prize for domestic radio reporting on the disadvantaged that they picked up in May, or Nieves's second place in documentaries last fall at Third Coast, a Chicago Public Radio contest. Czerina Patel, who produces Radio Rookies, says that a number of individuals and groups have sought her advice on starting similar programs.

Radio Rookies started with a 1999 workshop in Harlem, the brainchild of Marianne McCune, who was free-lancing for WNYC at the time. McCune, now a staff reporter at the station, learned that the Columbia University journalism school radio lab was empty during vacations, and she convinced Cappello and the school to let her teach city kids — often from poor and minority neighborhoods — to express themselves through radio.

Cappello was amazed at the quality of the final product, and agreed to air five of the six completed pieces. Listeners responded, and since then there have been five oth-

er workshops, one in each borough of the city, and WNYC has broadcast twenty-two additional stories. The kids have reported on, among other things, religion, graffiti, crime, suicide, national identity, Down Syndrome, all from the intimate vantage point of their own lives.

Karla Saavedra, an eighteen-year-old Brooklynite from Mexico City, is proud of the recognition, but what really lights her eyes is describing the reaction at home. "My whole class listened together," grins the cheery Saavedra, whose eight-minute piece, "English," detailed her struggles to learn English after no one in her family could communicate with a 911 operator. "They say, Congratulations, you're putting Bushwick up here."

The program runs on about \$85,000 a year from the Open Society Institute and other grants, and overhead support from WNYC. But the most crucial investment is the teachers' time and effort. Patel, McCune, and a handful of volunteers from WNYC and elsewhere spend hours with the rookies, whom they screen for dedication and interest from applications filed on the sta-

tion's Web site and through community groups.

The rookies do their own interviews and recording, and they edit their own sound. Sometimes a mentor (each student is assigned one) or producer comes along for an important interview, as when Jiovan "Big Pun" Ortiz tried to ask President Bush how his policies would affect Ortiz's family in the Bronx. The final mixing is usually done by WNYC staff.

Training a new wave of poor and minority journalists isn't necessarily the goal. Rather, says McCune, it's "getting young people to realize that things that matter to them are important enough to communicate to other people." A story like Janesse Nieves's "Heroin" resonates not only through the dramatic confrontation with her addicted father, but through her narration: "After all that, like nothing happened, Papi told me he wanted to buy me some cookies. But he didn't have the money." Such potent lines are often distilled from conversations with an editor, when, McCune says, "They blurt out a perfect radio sentence, and we say, 'Write that down!'"

— Ariel Hart



ROOKIES ON THE ROAD: In March 2001 WNYC took several of its fledgling reporters to a conference in San Francisco. Top: Jose Lopez, Linda Quevas, Rafael "Macho" Lopez, Jesus Gonzalez. Bottom: Antoine Bazilio, David Ford, Karla Saavedra.

WNYC RADIO ROOKIES

HISTORY: A REPORTER REMEMBERED



BIGART

AF WORLDWIDE

In the historical plaque department, reporters get little respect. When local kids take off for the big time, hometowns incline to forget them.

Hawley, Pennsylvania, however, is proud of its journalist son. On July 6, as part of the 175th anniversary of its naming, this town of 1,500 will place a plate on 824 Church Street, where Homer Bigart grew up. Bigart began his career as a copyboy at the *New York Herald Tribune* in 1927 and earned two Pulitzers there — for war correspondence in World War II and in Korea — as well as the first George Polk Award, before moving to *The New York Times* in 1955. For thirty years there was virtually no war, from Gaza to Tegucigalpa, that he did not see.

Bigart was admired in newspaper circles and his influence is wide for someone who wrote only for newsprint. Malcolm Browne, David Halberstam, and Neil Sheehan, who came to fame as young reporters in Vietnam, ac-

knowledge that they struggled to follow his example of skepticism and persistence. Reporters love to look like experts, but Bigart was never reluctant to keep asking questions.

As it happens, twelve years after his death, a letter from Germany that arrived this spring gives some hint of why Bigart's colleagues honored him. In 1961, when he was sent to the trial of the war criminal Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem, Bigart carried a note from his family's lawyer in Hawley introducing him to Dr. Robert Servatius, Eichmann's counsel. It won him a coveted interview. Eugene E. Glantz, a mem-

ber of the Hawley Anniversary Committee, wrote Germany to pursue this old link.

He got a response from Dieter Wechtenbruch, who had assisted Servatius in the trial that the world was watching so many years ago. Wechtenbruch noted, among other things, that Bigart, instead of asking why Servatius "was defending a mass murderer — as most journalists did" — wanted to discuss subtle details of legal strategy. It was easy to compare Bigart with other journalists, Wechtenbruch wrote, saying the differences might explain his own esteem "for a man who was true and just, severe without being offensive and friendly without being condescending."

"It is true," the German lawyer wrote, "that young men sometimes in their lives meet older men who show them the right way. Homer Bigart is certainly one of the few I met."

In the memorial department, this is probably better than a plaque.

— Betsy Wade

LANGUAGE CORNER

THE BRACKET BLUES

Except when excerpting text or in such devices as blurbs and pull-quotes, bracketing material inside quotations is, not to put too fine a point on it, an abomination.

1. Genuinely good quotes are mangled by bracketing: "Our prisons are full of [those who were] abused children," he said. Clunk. The story had already set up the quote adequately, but if it hadn't, a phrase before the quote, not that awful hiccup inside it, was the solution. (Explanations can also come after quotes, of course.)

2. Bracketing can puzzle readers and even make them suspicious (what did that guy really say?): "I read about teams getting competitive [by signing] other players," he said. Anyone's guess.

3. Bracketing assaults the ear, making for agonizing reading: "No one among the big three [networks] would run this long at the top [the begin-

ning of the show] with these kinds of stories" now, Rather said. In a word, Aargh! If a quote needs that much help (this one didn't) why bother to quote at all?

4. Some bracketing just doesn't make sense: "They started calling me Duke because I wear No. 4 [Duke Snider's old number]," said Piercy. Just end the quoted matter at "4" and tell the rest.

Most importantly, bracketing is lazy — a kind of stenography. In that regard it's a soul-mate of that other hallmark of bad journalistic writing, the stringing-together of words before a name (CJR, January/February 2000; "False Titles, etc." on the Web). Both are abdication of our duty to write English sentences. On deadline? No time to write? Try. It could become a habit.

— Evan Jenkins

A lot more about writing is in Language Corner at CJR's Web site, www.cjr.org.

TECHNOLOGY CORNER

Here are three useful resources worth bookmarking:

DISTANCE CALCULATOR

<http://www.indo.com/distance>

If you're looking to calculate distances between major cities, you should start with this handy tool, from Bali Online, an Indonesian portal. Put in two cities and it will tell you the distance between them. Works well for U.S. cities, as well as about 500 others outside the U.S.

PHONE NUMBER FINDER

<http://www.phonenumbers.net>

If you're looking for international phone numbers, visit this Swedish-based site. Pick a country and you will be taken to a list of online phone directories. If you're at a U.S. newsroom and need to contact someone overseas, this is the best place to start.

CONVERTING NUMBERS

<http://www.onlineconversion.com>

If you want to convert units of measure (say, kilometers to miles) or currencies, this site is an excellent place to find conversion guides. You will find help with more than 30,000 conversions.

— Sreenath Sreenivasan

Sreenath Sreenivasan (sree@sree.net), who teaches new media at Columbia, offers his tips for journalists at www.sree.net.



CUBA: WAITING FOR FIDEL'S FINALE

Every six months or so, Vanessa Bauza, one of the few American correspondents in Havana, gets a call from her editors. A rumor is again sweeping through the Miami community of Cuban expatriates: Fidel Castro is dead. Bauza, a reporter for South Florida *Sun-Sentinel* and the Tribune chain, checks it out. It's not true — again.

For the four American media organizations with permanent offices in Cuba — The Associated Press, CNN, *The Dallas Morning News*, and Tribune Company — the main job often seems to be keeping their fingers as close to Castro's pulse as possible. "There is a sense of a deathwatch," Bauza says. "It's very much something I'm aware of."

But even as she says that, she follows immediately with a disclaimer, as do other American reporters on the island. Cuba is a country of great stories. "We're not all sitting around twiddling our thumbs waiting for the big man to go to the sky," Bauza says.

Still, CNN's Lucia Newman says she once had to jump in her car and drive twelve hours, from one end of the country to the other, to check out Castro's health once again, as she often has over the last five years. Castro was fine.

All the Cuba reporters remember June of last year, when Castro apparently fainted and was helped from the stage two hours into a speech. "People were sad and shocked and scared," says Anita Snow, who has been the AP's Cuban correspondent since 1998. "It's the first time he showed physical vulnerabil-

ity." Reporters saw Cubans stumbling out of their houses sobbing. And they could almost hear the cheers from Miami.

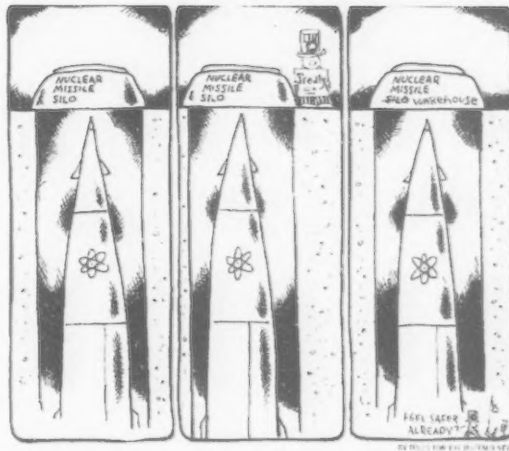
On May 1 Castro gave, for him, a relatively short forty-five-minute speech to the hundreds of thousands gathered at Revolution Square for the annual May Day rally. Even in the broiling sun, Castro, at seventy-five, looked fit. And later that month, when Jimmy Carter came to visit, Castro's energy appeared undimmed.

Cubans like to talk and like to complain. About no meat at the bodega. About housing problems. About long lines for the bus. About the American *bloqueo* (sanctions). But when it comes to politics, they often go quiet. This is especially true when it comes to imagining a future without Castro, who has led the country since 1959. In fact, they don't like to say "death" and "Castro" in the same sentence. "They say, 'when Fidel ceases to exist physically,'" says Tracey Eaton, correspondent for *The Dallas Morning News*. "Or, the 'biological solution.'"

Reporters on the Cuba beat say editors and producers don't seem as hungry for their stories as they did a few years ago, when the first American reporters returned after twenty-eight years out in the cold. But every newspaper has a plan in place to deal with the ultimate big story — Castro's death and the aftermath.

They all decline to reveal any details, except for Bauza, who half-jokingly outlines her plan: "I pick up the phone," she laughs, "and say, 'Send help.'"

— Alina Tugend



BY T. J. VAN DER MEER FOR THE BUFFALO NEWS

WORDS: HOW THE WEST WAS SPUN

In a day devoted to celebrating what President Bush called "an entirely new relationship" with Russia, he and President Vladimir V. Putin signed a treaty today to commit their nations to the most dramatic nuclear arms cuts in decades.

The New York Times, May 25

In a gilded Kremlin hall, President Bush and President Vladimir Putin of Russia signed agreements today sharply reducing their nuclear arsenals from the peaks of the Cold War...

The Washington Post, May 25

Now in Moscow, where President Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a landmark treaty today, calling for the largest reduction ever in their countries' nuclear arsenals.

CNN Live Today, May 24

In May, with six months of U.S.-Russian arms control negotiations nearly complete, Bush administration officials began describing the proposed treaty in language that arguably conveyed a much greater sense of achievement than the treaty deserved. Much of the major media went along for the ride.

Previously officials had explained that the treaty would require the transfer of thousands of strategic nuclear warheads off "operationally deployed" or active status, and presumably into storage. But then administration officials — led by President Bush when he announced the coming agreement May 13 — began saying simply that the pact would "eliminate" or "cut" the warheads from the arsenal.

The substance of the proposed text, though, had not changed. Unlike previous nuclear arms treaties, the proposed text does not require that anything be destroyed, U.S. officials said. The United States and Russia could still have in 2012 the 6,000 warheads and associated delivery systems (missiles, submarines, and bombers) they say each possesses today. This is a point that most media did eventually explain, but only a number of paragraphs down from their leads.

For the most part, only the experts took note. "When even *The New York Times* gets it wrong, you know there is deep confusion about the arms control treaty," wrote the arms control expert Joseph Cirincione, of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

— David Ruppe

DARTS & . . .

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

At KENS-TV, the CBS affiliate in San Antonio, reporter Bridget Smith's sweeps-week news story about a "miracle" anti-wrinkle cream included the price of the product, a local phone number for ordering, reassurance by the anchor about its safety and efficacy, and further details by its sole San Antonio distributor, one Jennifer McCabe. McCabe, it turns out, works for KENS as a producer/director in commercial production and is engaged to the newscast's executive producer. The *San Antonio Express-News* asked the news director, Tom Doerr, to comment on the apparent conflict. Replied Doerr smoothly, "I don't see an ethical problem."

At WMAQ-TV, the NBC owned-and-operated station in Chicago, Dave Lissner, flanked by the two anchors of the five o'clock Thursday newscast, has been delivering features on local restaurants. Lissner is the owner and publisher of a guide to local restaurants that advertise in his publication (in the form of menus). As reported by Robert Feder, media critic for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, WMAQ bosses found nothing unpalatable in Lissner's double role. "They've actually told me that I can do any restaurant I want," Lissner told Feder. "They've not told me to do or not do anything."

At WCIV-TV, the ABC affiliate in Charleston, South Carolina, reporter Jill Miller was covering state politics while serving as president of the East Cooper Republican Women's Club. Asked about the appearance of a conflict of interest, the general manager at the time, Steve Brock, told the city's *Post and Courier* in November that he saw no problem. "Everybody's biased," he said.

Meanwhile, it appears that when WRAL, the CBS affiliate in Raleigh, North Carolina, fired Renee McCoy, the longtime anchor on the early-morning and noon newscasts, it did the right thing for the wrong reasons. According to a story published in the *Raleigh News & Observer*, McCoy, a single mother, had asked for and been given a lighter workload to have more time with her young daughter, and much to her surprise, when contract renewal came up, management had complied — big time. But not to worry. Although McCoy, as well as the *News & Observer* reporter, kept the story's focus on "the larger issue" of her job loss — namely, the conflict between job and family — readers also learned, if only incidentally, that McCoy would now be expanding her already-established public relations business, in which, among other things, the anchor had been coaching newsmakers in dealing with the news media.

THE USES OF PUBLICITY

When *The Virginian-Pilot* received a press kit about "Precious Cargo," an upcoming PBS documentary about the first generation of Vietnamese adoptees, in which were featured two local residents who had met and fallen in love on a trip to their homeland sponsored by the agency that decades ago had brought them as infants to America, the paper didn't review the documentary as the publicists had hoped. Instead, *The Virginian-Pilot* ran a front-page article rehearsing the tale of the "Precious Cargo" newlyweds with no reference at all to the program or, for that matter, its producer, Janet Gardner, whom *The Virginian-Pilot* reporter had interviewed at length. The paper did, however, make use of one of the still photos included in the press kit.

ADVENTURES IN IDEA-LOGY

The big bold idea put forward in "The Ideas Industry" column in the March 3 *Washington Post* came from the mouth of Robert W. Hahn, identified as director of the American Enterprise Institute-Brookings Joint Center for Regulatory Studies: since "full" disclosure of conflicts of interest is never really possible, Hahn's argument went, the press should abandon the attempt and concentrate on a source's expertise rather than on his funding. For the Ideas Industry columnists Richard Morin and Claudia Deane, it was an idea whose time had clearly come. Readers were given nary a word about the generous funding of Hahn's Regulatory Studies Center by Arthur Andersen, Deloitte & Touche, Ernst & Young, and PriceWaterhouseCoopers, as well as State Farm, US Air, Edison Mission Energy, and other entities that have a vested interest in opposing industry regulation.

Hahn no doubt favors as well the all-too-common practice of omitting from the bios of outside op-ed writers the political orientation of the neutrally named groups they represent. In a March 18 piece in *The Bergen Record*, for example, lauding the benefits to humanity of "cheap energy" (i.e., fossil-burning fuels) while dismissing pollution threats to public health, and in another in the June 3 *Des Moines Register*, on why the proposed Kyoto pact would mean "all pain, no gain," the writer was identified as follows: "Tom Randall directs environmental programs at the John P. McGovern Center for Environmental and Regulatory Affairs at the National Center for Public Policy Research." Both papers also noted that "This piece was distributed by the Knight Ridder/Tribune News Service." What the I.D. left out is that the NCPPR exists to bring public opinion around to the conservative view and that, among its self-described environmental missions, "the collection and promotion of regulatory horror stories" is counted as key.

Darts & Laurels is written by Gloria Cooper, CJR's deputy executive editor. Nominations may be addressed to her by mail, phone (212-854-1887), or e-mail (gc15@columbia.edu).

... LAURELS

THE JENIN STORY



With Yasir Arafat charging that during the battle at Jenin, the West Bank camp that is home to 13,000 Palestinian refugees and a reputed training ground for terrorists, Israeli forces had committed a "massacre" of more than 500 innocents; with Israeli denials noted dutifully if unpersuasively; with much of the British press embracing Israel's guilt as established fact; with the United Nations preparing an investigation by a team whose political sympathies ensured that its conclusions would be challenged — amid all this confounding din, what was the world to believe? Enter the independent U.S. news media, on a fact-finding mission of their own. Touring the camp as soon as Israel deemed it safe, American journalists filed crucial — and credible — accounts of what they saw and heard and smelled. In *The Boston Globe*, for example, Charles A. Radin and Dan Ephron, after interviewing teenage Palestinian fighters, a leader of Islamic Jihad, an elderly man whose home was at the center of the fighting, and other residents of the camp who were present during the battle, concluded that "in contrast with allegations by some Palestinians and Amnesty International investigators... women and children were able to evacuate the camp before the climactic battle began." As the headline over their page-one story put it, CLAIMS OF MASSACRE

GO UNSUPPORTED BY PALESTINIAN FIGHTERS. Edward A. Gargan of *Newsday*, graphically describing his "daylong journey through bullet-scarred alleys, staircases punched through by rockets, and disemboweled houses" and recounting his numerous interviews with Palestinian residents, concluded that there was, as the headline summed it up, NO SIGN OF MASSACRE IN JENIN CAMP. Unsparing of the details of devastation and destruction, correspondents for other U.S. news outlets reached the same conclusion: not a deliberate, cold-blooded murder of hundreds, but a loss in battle of dozens. On that point, at least, Arafat and Sharon finally agreed.

(Only rarely, of course, does the truth about events in the Middle East lend itself to such quantification; the more ordinary burden of responsible journalism is in furnishing reportage free of subtly subjective weight. *Newsweek's* insightful account of the siege at the Church of Nativity in Bethlehem, for instance (cover story, May 20), included the perspectives of a Palestinian militant, an Israeli reservist, a Franciscan priest, and a teenage bystander. In contrast, a photo essay in *Time* (also May 20), by Carolyn Cole — the only photographer to get inside — showed nothing but trapped, suffering Palestinians. Sample captions: "Wounded"; "Tired and hungry"; "Nothing to do"; "All alone." "The men sent abroad were heartbroken," ran the largest blurb in the eight-page spread. "They sacrificed themselves.")

NO ROSE GARDENS HERE



It's a sad, familiar story, our inhuman treatment of humans who are mentally ill and poor. Does it need to be told again? Does it still have the power to shock? And, even if it does, will it do any good? The answer, as shown in Clifford J. Levy's inefaceable report in *The New York Times*, is yes and yes and yes. The result of a yearlong investigation of the so-called adult-home system — a system that today "serves" 15,000 resident-patients and costs \$600 million a year in taxpayer dollars to run — Levy's three-part series, *Broken Homes* (April 28-30) made disturbingly clear that the mostly for-profit homes are at least as bad as the snake pits of the psychiatric hospitals they were designed to replace, and in some ways arguably worse. Based on three dozen visits to the most troubled adult homes in New York City, hundreds of interviews, and an examination of thousands of pages of records, Levy's probe exposed a system in which illiterate aides dispense complex medications, wantonly neglected patients throw themselves from windows, unwitting residents are put under the knife for unneeded eye and prostate surgeries solely for the collection of Medicare-Medicaid dollars, and deaths natural or otherwise go unnoticed, unrecorded, and unquestioned. Before the ink on the series was dry, federal prosecutors began to investigate, the health department pledged reform, the Pataki administration hired a consultant to improve inspection, and his Democratic rivals had a new issue to seize on in New York's gubernatorial race.

IRON PRINCIPLES



Thanks to the actions of a teed-off *Golf Digest* editor, the magazine has taken a more open stance in its coverage of the PGA Tour. As brought to the fore by David Sweet in the *SportsBusiness Journal* (whose parent company, Advance Publication, also owns *Golf Digest*), the magazine recently signed on as a media sponsor of the PGAT, an arrangement that allows other sponsors to place ads in *Golf Digest's* "tour talk" sections as a way of satisfying their advertising obligations to the tour. In March, just such a section had, much to the staff's dismay, appeared in *Golf Digest* — nine and a half pages on the hobbies of PGAT stars and nine ads from the likes of IBM, Hyundai, TD Waterhouse, Starwood Hotels,

Hyundai, Thermacare, and Palm, most sporting the tour logo and none of the section beclouded by an "advertising" label. Informed by his *Golf Digest* bosses of plans for a similar section in September, Ed Weathers, a senior editor at the magazine, quit. Interviewed by the *SportsBusiness Journal* for its Weathers-resignation story, a *Golf Digest* spokesman insisted that "We would not compromise our integrity," but a spokesman for the tour suggested otherwise. "We discussed what content would be, and they did it," he told the *SBJ*. "We're trying to come up with editorial content that puts our players in a good light." On the day the story broke in *SBJ*, *Golf Digest* announced that its September "tour talk" section would be treated entirely as advertising or advertorial.

MEDIA OWNERSHIP:

What If Consolidation Proceeds to Its Logical Endpoint?



2006 - RANDOM SITES ON MANY BORING AND DANGEROUS SUBJECTS OVERRAN THE WEB UNTIL THE PRESIDENT'S CLEAN SCREENS® INITIATIVE.



2007 - BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES: CEREMONIAL LOGO BURNING AT "THE FINAL MERGER®".

BY TUCKER ELLIS

Pittsburgh, January 2, 2020

Although intended as a joke, the infoterrorist attack that interfered with last week's White House Christmas special was no laughing matter. The old Flash Gordon sequence that kept interrupting the Defense Department's beautiful "Ballet of Lasers" was an insult to our men and women under fire, while the laugh track that drowned out the presidential chaplain's benediction made a mockery of everything this nation stands for. The president himself was right when he observed, at his annual press conference two days later, "Make no mistake: their antics were not funny, and they will not stand." Carried out with chilling competence, the attack showed how capable our homegrown infoterrorists have become. According to Security Service officers, the Media Liberation Front (MLF) — the group that claimed responsibility for the attack — is a lethal new alliance of old enemies. Predictably, the MLF includes leftist groups that have opposed the Company™ since it was chartered thirteen years ago: Strike Two, the DuBoyz Club, the Sons of Ida Tarbell (SIT), and La Causa Nueva. Surprisingly, that network has been joined by anti-Company™ groups of the ultra-right — outfits like the Liddites, Killbox, Southern Comfort, and the Zenger League. The merger worries law enforcement agencies throughout the administration. "We've got to squash them all like bugs," Attorney General Ann Coulter said on Friday, "or they'll chew right through the fabric of our great republic."

Today, in short, we face the gravest challenge to our national security since the Cable Riots of 2009. But while we must crack down, we also have to win the hearts and minds of those who heed the infoterrorists out of ignorance. We must reach out especially to the young, who have no idea what life was like before the Company™ transformed it. To help them appreciate today's advantages, all young Americans must learn the story of the Company™, and how it made "TV worth living for."© Thus, this special historical report in the 2020 anniversary issue of Company™ Journalism Review by Tucker Ellis, the Silvio Berlusconi Professor of Commercial Policy at Carnegie Mellon Lockheed Martin University.

2020 HINDSIGHT

A Report From a Possible Future



2008—BACK THEN ANYONE COULD QUALIFY TO BE A JOURNALIST. THAT WAS BEFORE CAMERON DIAZ BECAME A CORRESPONDENT.



2015—EXCELLENT COVERAGE OF THINGS THAT REALLY MATTER TO US: HYPER-LOTTO, NEW FOOD PRODUCTS, U.S. MILITARY VICTORIES AND SEX SCANDALS.

TOO MUCH "NEWS"

Not long ago, life in this great land of ours was often boring and depressing because the news was always bad and there was way too much of it. News was hard to understand, and, invariably, it was bad. Bad news overran TV and radio, and filled the nation's major magazines and what were known as "newspapers." After Microsoft absorbed most of the Internet in 2005, the online universe was filled with news, since any malcontent or cyber-terrorist could open his own site. (The president's "Clean Screens"© initiative to fix that problem did not begin until 2006.) Before the Company's™ reforms, all our media churned out much the same unhealthy diet — economics, foreign affairs, "environmental" matters, politics, and other subjects that just don't belong on television.

There were a few bright spots amid the gloom and doom — expanding coverage of new movies and TV shows, big concerts and celebrities; a fair amount of useful product information; now and then a riveting sex scandal, such as we enjoy day after day on Company™ programs like *Nightline with Matt Drudge*™; and, whenever possible, the

sort of thrilling footage that we now get on the six Disaster Channels. But such "news to use"© was the exception rather than the rule.

The bad news was as redundant as it was excessive — a symptom of the anarchy that ruled before the Company™ cleaned up the nation's act.

Incredibly, the media had many owners prior to the new millennium. As recently as 1960, for instance, U.S. cities each had several "papers," TV stations, and radio stations — most of them owned locally, and all of them producing their own news! The national scene was just as inefficient, with no fewer than three separate TV networks, as well as three major national daily "newspapers," and three national weekly "news-magazines," while radio was a continental hodge-podge of competing firms. Although the situation started to improve with the passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, by the first years of the twenty-first century the media were still absurdly balkanized. In 2002, for example, TV — both terrestrial and cable — was largely dominated by five different corporations, with various other interests owning major pieces of this network or that "station group." The nation's "newspapers," meanwhile, were mostly

owned by some half-dozen separate companies.

Only radio provided a sound model for the future. By 2002 two companies, Clear Channel and Viacom, controlled nearly a third of all revenue, and so could bring a little order to the national free-for-all of radio programming. (Those two corporations merged in 2003.) Otherwise, redundancy prevailed, although there were some hopeful portents of reform. In 2001, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) voted to review those regulations that kept the system inefficient. In 2003, the FCC got rid of them, and then, in 2004, Congress got rid of the FCC — whose murky mission ("to serve the public interest, convenience, and necessity") had been declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.

Despite such helpful steps, the media remained in pretty sorry shape. In 2002, amazingly, there were still simultaneous nightly newscasts on ABC, NBC, and CBS, as there had been for decades. The

Dr. Ellis's article is based on a strange premonition by Mark Crispin Miller, professor of media studies at New York University and author of The Bush Dyslexicon: Observations on a National Disorder.



2018- EVERY NEWS REPORT THAT HELPS SELL ANYTHING IS A BOOST FOR OUR ECONOMY.



2020- INTERACTIVE NEWS: VIEWERS POINT AND CLICK FOR POP-UP FACTOIDS.

drain on resources continued until 2004, when the networks finally dropped their evening newscasts altogether.

That joint cancellation led directly to high-level talks about "the Final Merger"®, which would "make the news make some fiduciary sense for once," as Michael Powell, president of the Ford Foundation, put it in the spring of 2006. The following year, the government allowed the last four remaining media corporations — AOL/Time Warner/Sony/Liberty/Vivendi, GE/Disney/Bertelsmann/Gannett, News Corp/AT&T/Comcast/Knight Ridder/Viacom/Clear Channel, and Microsoft/The New York Times/Washington Post/Dow Jones — to converge into the Company™, which absorbed the old TV and radio networks, "station groups," "newspapers," and "newsmagazines" (and every other magazine) — as well as sports teams, cable systems, movie studios, record labels, Internet search engines, theater chains, and book publishers, among other cultural enterprises, including multiplexes, concert halls, arenas, stadiums, and ticket services (and, since just last year, advertising agencies).

The deal was universally applauded. "If anybody is against this move," joked Company™ CEO Lachlan Murdoch, "it's news to me!"

NEW PRIORITIES

For years, the networks had been trying to put their news shows in the black by slashing budgets to the bone, while mixing in such popular material as serial murder, satanic cults, Bill Clinton's

crimes, and other topics of great interest to Americans. It was a smart approach, and would have worked if the networks hadn't also felt obliged, sometimes, to cover "corporate crimes," foreign news, and other money-losers.

The Company™ did not repeat that error. It dropped those subjects that had pulled low numbers in the focus groups — what Bo Derek, head of the National Endowment for Democracy, called

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"news for losers." And instead of merely cutting its news budgets further, the company got rid of them entirely, assigning news production to its Movie Wing™, whose employees possessed the skill to load the news with thrills, laughs, smart pacing, patriotic themes, hot babes, and satisfying endings. That step made perfect economic sense.

By now, of course, we've all come to expect excellent coverage of the things that really matter to us — Hyper-Lotto, new food products, U.S. military victories, sex scandals, and the latest episodes of "Triage"™, "Thugs"™, or "Make-over"™. Most of us cannot recall the vast

wasteland that was TV news, with its confusing and irrelevant accounts, its slow and talky style. In 2000, for example, the average sound-bite was 7.3 seconds — long enough for a complex sentence or long jingle. Today's average sound-bite is a pithy 1.3. Sometimes a simple grunt or snicker makes the point.

Those who bash the Company™ today should get a DVD of, say, *ABC World News Tonight*, and try to stay awake through half of it.

They should also get a look at whom the networks used to put before the cameras to report the news. How they expected normal people to keep tuning in to news programs back then is quite the mystery. Old guys like Dan Rather and Tom Brokaw, fat guys, even women over forty — it seems that anyone back then could qualify to be a journalist. This was before the Company's™ wise decision to recruit anchors and reporters from entertainment spheres — a policy that started when it hired L'il Kim, N'Sync, and Cameron Diaz as correspondents on the venerable newsmagazine show, *Fifteen Minutes*™.

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

But thanks to the Company's™ reforms, the news was more than just a lot of pretty faces. It was also a consistent money-maker, now that the people running it knew how to make the most of what they had. In the pre-Company™ era, some journalists thought that marketing and journalism were at odds.

"Let's roll with it!"
Zombinal™
Roche Searle Pfizer™

Some years went by before the news was properly commercialized.

Of course, interactivity helped. It is a blessing that the young do not appreciate, since they have no memory of the days when viewers couldn't just click on the anchor's necktie or nose-ring to find out where to go to purchase one just like it.

The Company™ fully grasped the need for synergistic cross-promotion — a practice that had been condemned by critics who did not appreciate its economic value. In 2000, for example, there was much purist carping when the pets.com sock puppet did some comic turns on certain ABC news programs (Disney then owned both that network and a piece of pets.com). Today there are no critics left to whine about such enlightened self-advertisement. Every news report, special documentary, candid interview, or positive review (they once ran *negative* reviews!) that helps sell any movie, TV show, CD, or DVD, or videotape, or book, or book-on-tape, etc., whether it's online or off-, is one more boost for our economy. From such quiet teamwork everybody benefits. The Company™ collects for every minute of air-

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time, while advertisers can be sure of highly favorable coverage.

It is difficult to believe, but not too long ago this seamless system would have been impossible. Astoundingly, some journalists believed they were obliged to dig up news that might do damage to the very corporations that employed them. It was no easy task to change the negative culture of the news-rooms.

And so it was a great day for America when the Company™ and the administration started working hand in glove to show the diehards of the Fourth Estate exactly who was boss. In 2013 the government passed legislation making it a criminal offense to badmouth any corporate product. Starting with the Granny Smith Act, which outlawed the disparagement of any food or drink of any kind, the government moved on to do the same for oil tankers, oil wells, oil drilling equipment, oil pipelines, gas refineries, gas pipelines, nuclear reactors, automobiles (SUVs especially), buses, trucks, jet engines, motorcycles, fixed-wing aircraft, helicopters (Apaches in particular), locomotives, train tracks, land mines, mining equipment, weapons systems, elevators, escalators, power mowers, rubber tires, handguns, rifles, shotguns, ammunition, patent medicines, prescription drugs, cosmetics, fertilizer, lead paint, plastics, pesticides, herbicides, cigarettes, cigars, snuff, chewing tobacco, cribs, toys, high chairs, infants' car seats, kitchen appliances, gym equipment, clothing, shoes, and radioactive waste.

As useful as it was, such national legislation was moot the next year, when the administration managed to persuade the World Trade Organization to classify investigative journalism as an unfair trade practice. Thenceforth the Company™ and all its outside advertisers were finally freed from the old nuisance of "consumer news," as the extremists called it, which was nearly dead anyway. "Make no mistake: The terrorists have lost!" said John Stossel, head of the Federal Trade Commission.

The same year, Congress passed the Sarcasm Act, which made it a high crime to ridicule, mock, deprecate, belittle, disrespect, defame, revile, damn with faint praise, or second-guess the president or any of his aides or officers in any way. (The president's would-be critics had already been inhibited by the Copyright Extension Act of 2010, according to which all U.S. government officials are

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the legal owners of their own personas, and may therefore refuse permission to be quoted, mentioned, or described.) To make this work, the Bill of Rights was altered slightly to facilitate the war on terrorism, with the First Amendment qualified as follows:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances; unless the president should deem it necessary.

To supervise the partnership between the Company™ and the Government™, the two agreed to the formation of the Office of Strategic Planning, housed in ~~xxxxxxx~~, and including among its top directors ~~xxxxxxx~~, with ~~xxxxxxx~~, ~~xxxxxxx~~, and ~~xxxxxxx~~ on its staff. The OSP has been empowered to ~~xxxxxxx~~; ~~xxxxxxx~~. The ~~xxxxxxx~~, or even ~~xxxxxxx~~. ~~xxxxxxx~~ because of the possibility of further info-terrorist attacks. Its mission ~~xxxxxxx~~ the greatest of America. ■

Afghanistan: A Nascent Free Press Seizes the Moment (Carefully)

BY BORZOU DARAGAH

The rebirth of the Afghan media began, ironically, with a bomb packed into a news camera by two apparent al Qaeda operatives posing as journalists. On September 9, the bomb, quite possibly a precursor to the events of September 11, killed Ahmed Shah Massoud, the lion of Panjshir, who had fought against the Taliban militia since the mid-1990s.

The explosion, in the Northern Alliance stronghold of the Panjshir Valley, also badly injured Fahim Dashty, a distant relative of Massoud and the warlord's designated propaganda filmmaker. His hands, arms, and legs badly burned and bloodied, Dashty was airlifted to Tajikistan and later flown to Paris for treatment.

From his hospital bed, he hooked up with a group of idealistic French yuppies who took it upon themselves to help Dashty and other Afghans relaunch *Kabul Weekly*, once a mouthpiece for Massoud and his mujahedeen faction, as an independent nonpartisan weekly. And despite coming of age in the lap of a warlord in a country torn apart by ideological and territorial strife, Dashty, the skinny, chain-smoking editor-in-chief of the weekly, decided to become a real journalist.

"The stuff I did in the past was definitely propaganda," says Dashty. "In the past there was a necessity for propaganda. No one knew what the Taliban were doing to the people of Afghanistan. But now, without a doubt, I've learned the value of freedom of the press in Afghanistan." And he's not alone.

Dashty's country now is a devastated land with a shaky government that desperately needs channels of communication to close wide geographic, cultural, and political divides. And if the unstable transitional government cobbled together in the recent Loya Jirga, the grand assembly of the

elders held in mid-June, makes an independent, accessible press all the more pertinent, it also makes it more possible. Afghanistan's media — particularly in and around Kabul — have flowered since the overthrow of the Taliban, flowered, in fact, as at no time in Afghanistan's history. More than 100 new publications have launched, including about ten publications for women. The nation's quickly hammered-out press law is filled with vagaries and loopholes, and Afghan journalists have gleefully taken advantage. "This is it," says Dashty, pounding his fist on the table in his offices. "Right now is the only real period of freedom of press in Afghanistan."

Of course, building *anything* in one of the poorest countries in the world is no easy task. Per capita income here is less than \$500 a year. The phones don't work between cities. Mobile and satellite phones have arrived, but they cost far more than most local media outlets can afford. *Radio Solh* (Peace), two hours north of the capital, has its Kabul correspondent file by handing his dispatches to a taxi driver. Fewer than one in three Afghans can read.

An even more complicated challenge is finding independent journalists in an environment where political positions are forged in spilled blood

and the rhetoric of martyrdom. Massoud, who for all of his faults and blessings was a warlord who killed other Afghans, continues to haunt. His picture appears in the studio of *Radio Solh*, the only non-government radio station in the country, up in the Shomali Plain city of Jabulasaraj. It hangs in the offices of *Kabul Weekly*. A massive portrait of Massoud hangs at the new offices of

Mihan, a biannual cultural magazine that recently moved its offices from exile in Iran back to a smart neighborhood in Kabul. "We want to be independent of Ahmed Shah Massoud," says Ebrahim Kawesh, political editor of *Radio Solh*. But "it's going to take a while."

Massoud's complicated legacy also has a positive side. Afghan journalists wave his photo as their American counterparts wave the First Amendment, and projects to which he had some connection — such as *Radio Solh* and the *Kabul Weekly* — enjoy something akin to immunity from official and semi-official attempts at intimidation and censorship.

Then there are the warlords. Hamid Karzai may be a committed democrat who lived in the United States and understands the value of a free press, but the former mujahedeen commandants who control all but the area around Kabul do not. They all have the blood of innocents on their hands, and don't take kindly to independent journalists who might try to dredge up past misdeeds or flesh out current exploits.

Afghanistan's nascent press is prodded on by foreign NGOs like Aina, a nonprofit group, funded partly by UNESCO with the goal of helping media



Fahim Dashty, *Kabul Weekly*

KARIM KAZEM

flourish. Some of its employees — mostly French business school graduates — are refugees from the Internet bubble, and it's probably no coincidence that Aina operates much like a dot-com incubator: would-be publishers submit proposals to the organization, which might grant them a little cash, a little space to work, and a lot of moral support.

In Aina's ramshackle smoke-filled complex, in front of the foreign ministry compound, are the offices of *Kabul Weekly* and *Malalai*, a women's magazine supported by the French *Marie Claire*. A recent issue included an interview with the "only parachutist woman in Afghanistan" and an article titled "Women's Rights Trampled," grazing the touchy subject of men's fears about women's liberation. Another women's magazine, *Roz*, is supported by the French *Elle*.

In the same complex is the office of *Zanbil-e-Gham*, a biting, satirical monthly that was the brainchild of Osman Akram, a jolly middle-aged former engineer who was fearless enough to publish fifteen underground editions of his scathing, illustrated 'zine during the Taliban years.

Akram and others are in a mad rush to expand the boundaries of the permissible before a clampdown begins. They don't take today's relative press freedoms for granted. Maybe more than any other people in the world, Afghans know the clock can go backwards, and many have followed events in the Islamic Republic of Iran, where an independent press was brutally crushed by the clerical government in the late 1990s.

The sprint to expand freedom began just hours after the first reports that the Taliban had fled Kabul in November. Back then, a group of broadcasters and Northern Alliance mujahedeen roused Jamila Mujahed from her sleep and asked Afghanistan's best-known female newscaster if she'd be willing to be the first female voice on Kabul's airwaves since the Taliban's five-year reign of terror began. She didn't hesitate. In her slippers, chaos and gunslingers still ruling the streets, she was hurried to the stu-



UNVEILED: Jamila Mujahed was the first woman on the air after the Taliban. She also edits a women's magazine, *Malalai*.

dios. All the transmitters had been destroyed in the U.S. bombing campaign, so the broadcasters dragged an old ten-kilowatt transmitter out of the basement of the government-owned radio station. It couldn't reach beyond a few miles outside Kabul, so Mujahed's first words were as much for the history books as the few who could hear her: "Dear fellow citizens of Kabul, the Taliban have fled Kabul."

Still, Mujahed, who is the editor-in-chief of *Malalai* as well as a television newscaster, says she remains just as terrified of some of the former warlords now running Afghanistan as she was of the Taliban. "Many of the current leaders of Afghanistan raped and killed women in the name of Islam," she says.

Indeed, just after female voices began broadcasting over *Radio Solh* last October, one of the warlords denounced it as immoral, threatening to take matters into his own hands. After asking the women to get off the air for a couple days, Mohammad Fahim, Massoud's successor, got the women back to work. But Rasoul Sayef, the warlord who started the crisis, remains a powerful member of Afghanistan's judiciary.

Save for *Radio Solh*, all the broadcast outlets in Afghanistan are government-owned. (There is a dearth of proposals to create new outlets, despite the problem of

illiteracy.) And almost all the major players in broadcast have ties to one political group or another.

One player who remains unconnected to the past wars is Barry Salaam, the responsible and mature twenty-three-year-old managing editor of *Good Morning Afghanistan*, an independently produced one-hour morning news show on government-owned *Radio Afghanistan*, which is broadcast in Dari and Pashto, the two main languages of the country. His fluency in both languages allows Salaam to edit scripts in either, in a country where the blood feud between the two ethno-linguistic groupings remains volatile.

The head of his family despite being the youngest of eight children, Salaam spent almost all of the Taliban years in Kabul, studying journalism and making the mundane daily newsletter of the International Committee of the Red Cross he edited the hottest read coming out of Afghanistan.

He is careful. Journalism in Afghanistan, even during this period of relative freedom, requires a steady hand. And a nervous control freak like Salaam may be the perfect person at the helm. "When you have editorial independence in a situation like this, you're not supposed to do anything to undermine the peace process," he says, his face so young you almost expect to see braces each time he opens his mouth. "You don't have to use all of your freedom at once. We have to go gradually. We have to make people get used to us and the way we do the news. We're very careful with our freedom."

In a sense, his *Good Morning Afghanistan* is quite an ordinary news broadcast: current events, weather, traffic, and sports. And a touch of Salaam's journalistic irreverence. "We had the minister of construction on the show, and grilled him about when they're going to fix the potholes in the road," he says in perfect English. "Two weeks later we had a reporter in the streets describing the work crews fixing the holes on the roads."

"I love that story." ■

Borzou Daragahi is a Tehran-based journalist covering the Middle East and Central Asia. He can be reached at borzou@aol.com.

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EXPOSURE TO LIGHT

The Photographer's Eye in a Digital World



Of all media, perhaps still photography came closest to showing the truth. The best photographs captured a precise moment, holding it there for inspection, offering each image as a fragmentary symbol of someone's reality. By the nature of their ambiguity, those pictures gave viewers the privilege of using their imaginations to interpret the reality.

— John Laurence, *The Cat from Hue*

Laurence is talking about photographs of the war he covered in Vietnam, a long way away from a Michigan basketball court and a cheerleader named Jessica Parks, above. Still, when we look at this image, we do have the privilege of bringing something to the table, as Laurence suggests. A cheerleader born without arms may be a bit easy, in terms of evoking reaction. But the part of the story that we fill in is perhaps less about Jessica than about the nature of the support she gets at North Branch High School, as represented by the sweet and determined girls here who literally hold her up.

This special package is both a celebration of photojournalism and an exploration of the health and status of the art. Good photojournalists, both those on a newsroom payroll and those on their

own, have always had to struggle to have their pictures considered on a par with the words. This has become no easier in a digital age and, in fact, harder in many ways, as Peter Howe explains in the following essay and John Dorfman affirms in his article on page 60. Yet photographers with passion and commitment keep producing stellar visual journalism. A sampling of this kind of work can be seen in our "Exposures" gallery, beginning on page 28. And in a series of profiles starting on page 42, we meet some of the people who produce this kind of work and find out how and why they do it. Along the way we get intimate glimpses into lives and locations — from Jasper, Indiana, to the former Yugoslavia; from death row in Texas to a deathbed in Minneapolis; from a quiet forest of Vermont to a lively church in Flint, Michigan. Take a look.

It is ironic that in the more than thirty years that I've been associated with photojournalism some of the most reliable income it has provided has been from writing articles predicting its imminent demise. But like a recalcitrant old relative, however frail its condition, it refuses to breathe its final breath.

And even this is a misstatement. In fact, photojournalism as an activity is alive and healthy; it is the market for photojournalism that is in need of life support. Courses in documentary photography, such as those provided by the International Center of Photography in New York, are oversubscribed; newspapers, the last bastion of staff photographers, have a choice of talent on the rare occasions that a vacancy develops; for every grant awarded to a free-lance project, there are hundreds of applicants; some newspapers, such as the Newark *Star-Ledger*, are leading the way in the production of striking documentary photography; even the gray old *New York Times* has transformed its look through the bold use of space and color.

There are plenty of people producing serious photojournalism. Each day photographers churn out miles of film and billions of pixels to record life on this planet. But if you're a free-lancer and you try to sell the results of your efforts to a publication with a circulation of more than 500, suddenly being the manager of the Tampa Bay Devil Rays doesn't seem such a bad job. Even if you do succeed in placing your work in a national publication the financial reward will be minimal. When I joined *The New York Times Magazine* in 1987 the day rate for free-lance photographers was \$250. Today this has risen to \$400 (unless you're working in an area where people are actually shooting at you, when it doubles). Even someone with my limited math skills can work out that this raise is in fact a reduction. *Time* magazine pays the same quotidian amount to free-lance photographers, higher for those on contract, and an extra hundred bucks a day for nonexclusive electronic rights that *The New York Times Magazine* includes in its \$400. In a market where there are few buyers and many willing and talented suppliers, it is unlikely that even the most successful photojournalists will work more than 100 or 150 days a year. So it becomes clear that whatever motivations exist for doing this kind of work, money isn't among them.

A Passion in Search of a Market

What happened to the market, and the reasons for its dramatic shrinkage, are complex, and the advent of television is only one of them, albeit a major one. As someone brought up in Britain I never experienced the weekly anticipation of the arrival of *Life* magazine, but I've had it recounted to me often enough to believe it was a reality. Television's impact on *Life* was twofold: it made its news content less relevant, and it siphoned off advertising dollars on which the magazine overly depended. I say "overly" because in its desperate attempt to maintain circulation numbers it was offering subscription discounts that were so deep that the cover price was no longer a significant revenue source. Furthermore, advertising and photojournalism have always had an uneasy coexistence. Few auto manufacturers or jewelry retailers want to see their wares promoted within the context of a story on famine or drug addiction.

And while we're on the subject of consumer goods, this brings us to another problem that photojournalism had during the last half of the twentieth century, namely peace and prosperity. The old adage that nobody sends you to the airport to photograph a plane that landed safely has applied to most of this period.

Why are so
many young
people becoming
photojournalists?
How will they
make a living?

As a civilization we seem to respond most strongly to imagery during times of stress. Think of the photographs that have burned their imprint on your memory. They are likely to include the work of the WPA during the depression, Robert Capa's blurry record of the D-Day landings, Joe Rosenthal's inspiring flag-raising at Iwo Jima, or Margaret Bourke-White's witness of the horrors of Buchenwald. Other candidates are Ed Clark's mourner at FDR's funeral cortege, David Douglas Duncan's battle-weary marines in Korea, Eddie Adams's capture of a street execution in Vietnam, Nick Ut's photograph of napalmed children, or John Filo's pictures of the Kent State killings. The events of September 11 gave renewed relevance to the still documentary image. Although the terrible beauty of the cascading towers belonged to television, the rest of that long and tragic day was memorialized by the still photographers on the scene. The hunger for images then was palpable. Special issues of news magazines sold out the minute that they hit the stands; the remarkable "Here is New York" project, in which photographers, both professional and amateur, displayed their work in a Soho storefront, attracted thousands of visitors; a postage stamp was made from Thomas Franklin's Iwo Jima redux of three firefighters raising the flag at Ground Zero.

Still photographs really do seem to give us something to hold onto, a memory and a comfort that the moving image or even words rarely can. But the validation that the world of photojournalism experienced in the days after September 11 was short-lived. In fact, the brief period during which the public's hunger for serious photography seemed insatiable served more to highlight what has been lost than to proclaim photojournalism's rebirth. The harsh truth is that photojournalism is no longer a popular medium. The end product is often too unsettling for magazines geared more to entertaining than informing. As *Life* died, *InStyle* ascended. Except under extreme circumstances, such as the September attacks, photojournalism rarely appears in publications as an independent element, as was the case in the old magazine or newspaper days. Today it is the accompaniment rather than the serenade, and W. Eugene Smith's self-comparison to Beethoven would have even less validity now than when he made it decades ago.



CAPTURING THE SPIRIT: Richard Battle, six, of Flint, Michigan, practices at his gospel-singing mother's home (see page 28).

The nineties saw the emergence of two huge, super-powerful, digitally based photo agencies, Getty and Corbis, both headed by very rich men, Mark Getty and Bill Gates. These mega-agencies have become the photographic equivalent of factory farming, and although they provide an effective marketing system for some commercial stock photographers, to date they have proved to be least effective in the sale and promotion of photojournalism (see "Narrowed Vision," page 60).

These super-agencies have had one good effect on the photography business, and that is to give its practitioners a boot-in-the-backside reminder that it is in fact a business. Photographers routinely overestimated their earnings and underestimated their expenses. Mom-and-pop agencies operated on the assumption that a 50/50 split with photographers was a fair division of revenues, without ever having done a business plan to see if this was true. Getty and Corbis, on the other hand, came in with contracts between them and their suppliers (a disturbing move in what had largely been a handshake industry), with percentages on sales weighted in the agency's favor. Contracts have now become the norm, ranging from the truly onerous, such as Condé Nast's, to the well-intentioned *Business*

Week version. Because publishers had no business model for Internet publication, they try to protect themselves by including in their contracts such apocalyptic phrases as "all technologies hereinafter devised" and "throughout the universe," which shocked photographers who thought they were shooting for a U.S.-based magazine that would be off the newsstands in a month. Technology has changed all that, and now they are not only shooting for magazines that have multiple language editions in multiple markets, but for accompanying Internet sites as well. (So far, publishers have generously limited their rights needs to this universe, and not extended them to those hereinafter created.)

When the digital revolution first arrived, it polarized photographers into two opposing camps. Some took a Luddite approach, refusing to have any work scanned or posted on the Internet; others thought it was the answer to all of photojournalism's troubles. What has transpired of course is neither one thing nor the other. The fear of massive piracy of pictures on the Web has pretty much subsided. But with a few exceptions — MSNBC and *The Washington Post* among them — the hope that the Internet would provide a robust alternative market has yet to become a reality. Digital technology has had other benefits,

however. More photographers, especially photojournalists, are shooting with digital cameras and transmitting directly to their clients via satellite phones attached to their laptops. This has neutralized television's advantage of speed. (One of the biggest logistical difficulties for the photographer in the field today is keeping the batteries charged, which becomes a nightmare in places such as Afghanistan. The recent conflict there produced stories of harried photographers transporting portable generators and the requisite gasoline on the backs of horses through the mountains, ancient and modern working together.)

Another interesting and unpredicted consequence of technology is the ability of photographers to come together on Internet forums to discuss their hopes, fears, frustrations, anger, and sometimes, although infrequently, to offer solutions to the problems that beset them. Their empowerment through such groups as EP (Editorial Photographers) has been revolutionary. Until recently the easiest workforce to divide and conquer was photojournalists. They were a union organizer's nightmare: self-employed; highly individualistic; constantly on the move; often working alone; very competitive; usually desperate for money. None of them knew much about what their peers were doing, or being

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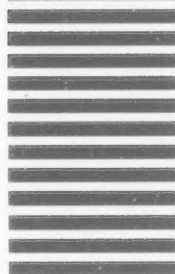
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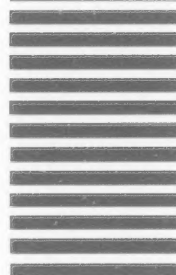
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paid, whether they were flying business or coach, or what scanner gave the most consistent results. All of that has changed as, from apartments and hotel rooms around the world, they gather nightly to berate editors, discuss contracts, and share information on pricing, copyright, and staff benefit packages. The strength that this improved communication has given them was evident during the recent strike by the French Sygma photographers against Corbis. Every day e-mails containing press releases full of Gallic flair and drama would land in the in-boxes of anyone deemed worthy of receiving them. They even included photographs of naked photographers, their photographic equipment modestly covering their natural, symbolizing the way they felt stripped by Bill Gates's henchmen.

Given that so far this assessment of the state of photojournalism is as cheery as a performance review of the FBI, a question arises: Why are so many young people becoming photojournalists and how will they ever make a living out of it? The first part of the question is, of course, easier to answer than the second. I recently conducted a series of interviews with ten of the world's leading war photographers. Among the commonly expressed attractions of their extremely hazardous careers was the feeling of being part of history and the sense that what they did had importance beyond supplying illustration for magazines or newspapers. They often felt that the witness they provide will have more value in the future than in the present, as evidenced by the fact that the War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague is using photography taken in Bosnia to prove the massive human rights violations that occurred there (see "Shooting War," page 48). There also still exists enormous romance swirling around the figure of the photojournalist, although the free-spirit, devil-may-care hero of legend is frequently at variance with the anxiety-ridden and impoverished reality of many of my acquaintances.

The advice to the would-be war photographer from one of the interviewees, Patrick Chauvel, was to be rich or do something else, and although I wouldn't go that far, I understand what he means. Those who are not able to rely on a trust fund have to look for other means of support to enable them to work. Unless

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you're an established free-lancer or a staff photographer for a newspaper, being a photojournalist today is a bit like being an actor or a painter. You often have to take a day job to help make ends meet. Some of the greatest names in photojournalism supplement their incomes with non-journalistic work such as advertising or corporate annual reports. Other avenues of financing important projects that are unlikely to be extensively published are grants and awards. Institutions such as the Alicia Patterson Foundation and the W. Eugene Smith Memorial Fund provide a limited amount of money to a small

number of people. But for many young photojournalists the only option is to be determined and courageous, and not mind living in poverty for several years. The fact that so many are prepared to do exactly this is both photojournalism's biggest strength as well as its biggest challenge. The challenge is the danger that young photographers will breathe too much of their own air. It takes enormous discipline and maturity to work on a self-assignment, a discipline that is automatically imposed through a magazine or newspaper commission. If photojournalists are only producing work for the approval of other photojournal-

ists, then its value will be compromised. Without a healthy market to give the photographer clear direction, even the best work risks descending into a spiral of irrelevance.

◆
Yogi Berra once said that anything was difficult to predict, especially the future, and that certainly applies to seeing photojournalism's place in the twenty-first century. Maybe the Internet will finally provide the showcase that is its potential; maybe the answer is the "Platypus" photographer envisioned by Dirck Halstead, a combination of still photographer and videographer (see "Moving Pictures," page 54); maybe there is a case to be made for a WPA project in times of prosperity as well as depression; maybe photojournalism becomes a medium whose home is on the walls of art galleries and museums or niche Web sites. Whatever its future is, photojournalism's survival depends on finding and developing markets, either new and unforeseen, or established but undeveloped.

For the immediate future it is difficult to see much changing in the fortunes of this battered profession, and yet this doesn't seem to dull the enthusiasm and resolve of its practitioners. Several years ago the late Howard Chapnick and I started a cheaply produced magazine called *Outtakes*. Its mission was to provide an outlet for work that was either unpublished or under-published. The one problem that we never had during its three-year lifespan was finding material with which to fill its pages. There was a deluge of stories, more than we could handle, ranging from such luminaries as Sebastião Salgado and Mary Ellen Mark to photographers just out of college. We ceased publication in 1995, because, as Howard said, neither of us needed that big a tax write-off, and yet to this day I get submissions. One thing you've got to say about photojournalists, they're a stubborn and determined lot, and it's those qualities that will determine photojournalism's future. It will die only when people stop doing it, and there seems to be no risk of that for the moment. ■

Peter Howe, who writes regularly on photography, was a free-lance photojournalist for thirteen years before becoming picture editor for The New York Times Magazine, and later director of photography at Life. His book on combat photography, Shooting Under Fire, will be published by Artisan this fall.



Announces THE KAISER MEDIA FELLOWS IN HEALTH FOR 2002

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Jon Palfreman, senior producer, *FRONTLINE*

Project: The development, marketing, and pricing of prescription drugs.

John Price, reporter, *The New York Amsterdam News*

Project: Examining the social, cultural, and psychological roots of African-American health disparities.

Marc Shaffer, independent television producer

Project: Implementing California's Proposition 36 - treatment as an alternative to incarceration for drug addiction.

Robin D. Stone, freelance writer and editor, New York City

Project: The impact of sexual abuse, focused on African-American families.

In 2003, the Kaiser Media Fellowships Program will again award up to six fellowships to print, television and radio journalists and editors interested in health policy, health care financing and public health issues. Information about the 2003 program will be available shortly, with applications due in March 2003. The aim is to provide journalists with a highly flexible range of opportunities to pursue individual projects, combined with group briefings and site visits on a wide range of health and social policy issues.

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EXPOSURES

LISA DeJONG

| *The Flint Journal* |

Along Martin Luther King Avenue





FLINT, MICHIGAN

In late summer 2001, when Lisa DeJong approached residents living along Martin Luther King Avenue in Flint, Michigan, the photographer wanted to show what life was like on this six-mile stretch of broken-down street. Businesses had fled as Flint's economy nosedived in recent years. There were no grocery stores or banks; only churches and funeral homes remained. "All you can do on the street is go to church or die," DeJong says. Residents initially didn't want to cooperate with DeJong. They feared that *The Flint Journal* only cared about another story highlighting the crime and poverty in their community. So DeJong gained their trust by empowering them. "I told them that their words would be in the paper," she says. "It would be a whole paragraph of what they thought about the street. Finally, they felt like they had a voice." DeJong discovered a group of people determined to stick by their neighborhood, people who take it upon themselves to plant flowers, fix signs, and sweep the sidewalks. Through it all their church, Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist, was a source of strength. At left we see Rachelle Walker, the church secretary, singing in a church stairwell as the music starts, and below, a parishioner fans himself with an MLK fan during the service. "Without this church," Walker says, "there would be less hope on this street."





NORTHEAST KINGDOM, VERMONT

While photographing the financial collapse of a three-generation dairy farm in northern Vermont, *The Boston Globe's* Bill Greene came across a cluster of secluded, run-down cabins. Each fall, generations of men travel to an isolated area of Vermont known as the Northeast Kingdom, a tourist-free zone that Greene calls "the last frontier of New England." There, for two weeks in November, grandfathers, fathers, and sons gather to hunt deer. Greene, a seventeen-year veteran of the paper, knocked on cabin doors and hung out at the local country store, trying to convince the wary hunters that he only wanted to portray their passion for the hunt. "I wasn't trying to do some undercover exposé on hunting," he says. Although not a hunter himself, Greene camps and fishes, and says he has "a compassion for people who work close to the land." Eventually the men invited Greene to tag along. For three weekends in November 2000, Greene followed five families as they tracked white-tailed deer through the Kingdom. He photographed the hunt in black and white. "Color tends to be distracting," he says. "Black and white cuts to the essence of the subject." The hunt is more than just a vacation; it is a rite of passage into manhood for the younger boys. "It used to be about getting food," one hunter told Greene. "Now it's a male bonding ritual."



EXPOSURES

BILL GREENE

The Boston Globe

Rites of Passage





EXPOSURES

BRIAN PETERSON | *Star Tribune* |

'With Unending Grace'





VESELI, MINNESOTA

Doug and Nancy Simon of Veseli, Minnesota, celebrated the birth of their daughter, Candace, in June 1988. But their baby girl soon became chronically ill, unable to recover from common colds and sniffles. The following spring, her parents learned why. Doctors informed them that Doug had contracted the AIDS virus years earlier from a blood transfusion, and had passed it along to Nancy, who in turn passed it to Candace. Brian Peterson was primarily a sports photographer for the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*, but his editors assigned him to the Simons' story. It was his first documentary piece, and for the next six years, at least once every week, Peterson visited the Simons. He captured happier days, with Nancy and Candace, above, and was there for Candace's funeral in 1993, and when Nancy died in 1996, left. Two other children, Eric and Brian (below, at a favorite fishing hole), were spared from the virus. Nancy's last words to Eric were, "I know you're going to be the best fisherman in the world." Peterson, who is married with children of his own, never allowed the two families to meet. "That was my professional responsibility," he says. "It really made it difficult. I had to grieve on my own." ■



EXPOSURES

LEAH HOGSTEN

The Salt Lake Tribune

Prosecuting Polygamy



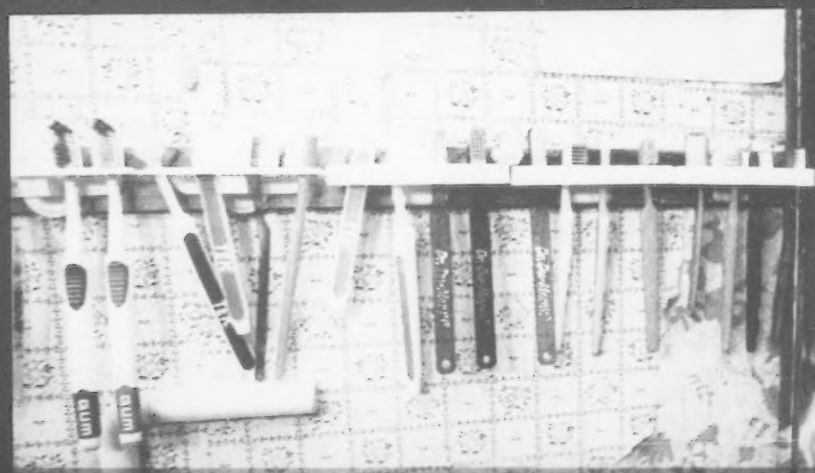
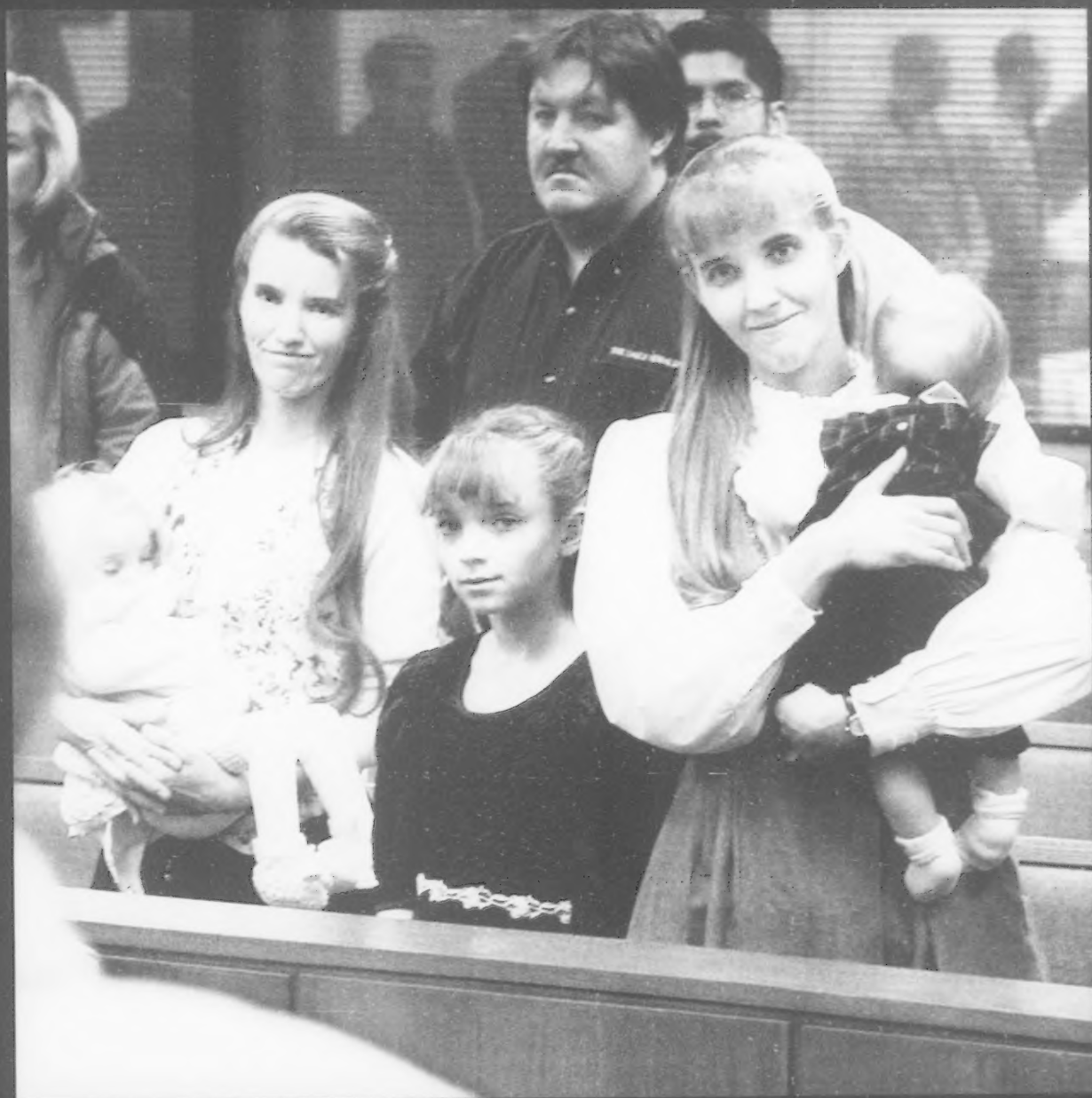
SALT LAKE CITY

Husband to five women, father to twenty-nine children, Tom Green paraded his life-style on television shows, piquing the interest of American audiences and the county prosecutor, who charged Green with bigamy in April 2000. *The Salt Lake Tribune* dispatched Leah Hogsten to the Green household, a commune of mobile

homes in the Utah desert, to give readers a view into life there. The family immediately welcomed Hogsten into their homes, even allowing her to stay the night in their guest trailer. "It wasn't like any other family I'd ever seen," Hogsten says. Surrounded by the constant tumult of so many women and children, there was "always something going on, every-

where at all times," she says. The thirty-year-old photographer discovered that her work improved when she stopped looking through the lens of her personal prejudices and simply took the shots. "You had to say, 'This is a unique family. I don't have to agree with them. But I'll keep my eyes open.'" Hogsten visited the family during various stages of the trial, taking

shots of Green leading up to and during his court hearing, and photographing the family after he was convicted in May 2001 and sentenced to up to five years in prison. Hogsten last saw the Green family in April, still puzzled by some of their beliefs, but appreciating what she could. "They're all great mothers," she says. "They love their children." ■



EXPOSURES

BRIAN PLONKA

The Spokesman-Review

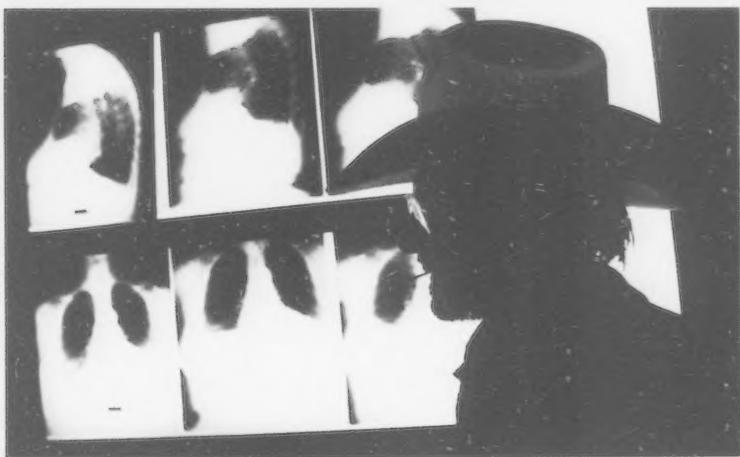
Dying from Asbestos



LIBBY, MONTANA

In the past twenty-five years, more than 160 people have died of asbestos-related illness in tiny Libby, Montana, poisoned by a blanket of asbestos fibers that descended from the W.R. Grace vermiculite mine that, until it closed in 1990, was a mainstay of Libby's economy. *The Spokesman-Review* in Spokane, Washington, reported the story, but a staff photographer, Brian Plonka, noticed a lack of visual coverage by his paper. He convinced his editors to let him spend January through March of 2001 in Libby. "I thought the easiest way to con-

vey the story was in pictures," says Plonka. Pictures like this shot, left, of Cloie Boardner, whose grandmother died of asbestosis, watching her grandfather pound a cross into the ground before a memorial service for the victims; or one of a former miner at W.R. Grace, who is dying from exposure to asbestos, looking at X-rays of his wife, who may also have been affected by fibers he brought home on his clothes. The EPA has taken charge of the clean-up, and, Plonka says, "When they start cleaning the homes, I'll be there for that." ■



EXPOSURES

JENNIFER LINDBERG | *The Texas Observer*

Mentally Retarded on Death Row



AUSTIN, TEXAS

When Doil Lane, forty-one, confessed to the 1980 rape and murder of eight-year-old Bertha Martinez, he crawled into the lap of the Texas Ranger who was interrogating him. At the

trial, Lane's defense attorney argued that, because Lane's I.Q. was in the fifty to sixty-four range (seventy and below, with other limited abilities, is generally considered legally retarded), the state should not execute him.

The judge and jury were not persuaded.

Jennifer Lindberg, a freelance photographer whose work has appeared in *Marie Claire* and *US Weekly*, photographed Lane for *The Texas Observer* through the Plexiglas divider in the prison visiting room, part of a series of portraits of mentally retarded inmates on death row.

For Lindberg, the project was a revelation. "I wasn't aware how prevalent the execution of the mentally retarded is," she said in early June. It is hard to measure such things, but her work may have contributed to the public shift that led to the Supreme Court's late June decision to ban such executions.

CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION



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- **Yvette tenBerge**, *The Prensa San Diego*, for Continuous Coverage
- **Jane Northrop**, *The Pacifica Tribune*, for a Feature Story, "Middle school students learn lessons in aging awareness"
- **Jennifer Deitz Berry**, *The Palo Alto Weekly*, for a News Story, "Between a rock and a hard place"
- **Jane Northrop**, *The Pacifica Tribune*, for a Series, "Grand jury investigates Laguna Salada Union School District"
- **The Independent Newspaper**, for a Series, "The Budget Saga"
- **Kathryn Baron**, *KQED-FM, San Francisco*, for a Series, "The Testing of America: Education or Obsession"
- **Youth Radio, Berkeley**, for Locally Produced Program, "Making the Grade"
- **KXTV-TV, Sacramento**, Newscast Locally Produced Program, "Teacher of the Month"

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THE WORLD OF PHOTOJOURNALISM

Compiled by DAVID FRIEND

BEIJING, CHINA

Foreign Correspondents Club;
Chinese Photographers Association.

TOKYO, JAPAN

Center for camera manufacturing
and book publishing; Tokyo Metro-
politan Museum of Photography;
Japan Photographers Association;
Foreign Correspondents Club.

COLUMBIA, MISSOURI

Site of photo workshops
founded by Cliff and Vi Edom;
birthplace of the University of
Missouri School of Journalism's
annual Pictures of the Year
(recently renamed POY Inter-
national) Awards competition.

BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON

Headquarters of Corbis,
Bill Gates's image bank.

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Headquarters of Getty Images.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Long-time photographic hotbed,
current home of the International
Fund for Documentary Photography,
Ansel Adams Center for Photography.

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

University of California Berkeley
Graduate School of Journalism
has expanded its photojournal-
ism curriculum.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Hub of celebrity photography;
J. Paul Getty Museum.

TUCSON, ARIZONA

The Center for Creative Photo-
graphy at the University of Ari-
zona, an archive, museum, and
research center.

SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

The Santa Fe Photographic
Workshops help hone the skills
of pro and amateur shooters.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

A center of photojournalis-
tic innovation; Museum of
Contemporary Photography;
Art Institute.

JEFFERSONVILLE

The Eddie Adams V
fledgling photojour
those at the top of

ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

Kodak Headquarters; Geo
Eastman House; Rochest
Institute of Technology
School of Photographic A
& Sciences.

AUSTIN, TEXAS

University of Texas at Austin
has taught photojournalism
since 1908.

David Friend, Vanity Fair's editor of creative development, writes frequently about photography for TheDigitalJournalist.org and for other venues. As director of photography of LIFE, he founded the Alfred Eisenstaedt Awards for Magazine Photography under the auspices of Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism. He was an executive producer of the CBS special, 9/11.



ROCHESTER, NEW YORK
The Poynter Institute for Journalism offers seminars in visual journalism.

NEW YORK
George Eastman Museum hosts the annual International Center of Photography, as well as major newspapers and many photo-driven magazines.

LONDON, ENGLAND
Cornerstone of photojournalism, hosting everything from Getty Images to Fleet Street to the National Portrait Gallery; nexus for photographers, book publishers, magazines, agencies, etc.

ROCKPORT, MAINE
The Maine Photographic Workshop offers two-week classes as well as expeditions overseas.

NEW YORK CITY
America's capital of photojournalism; home base for many photographers, studios, galleries, publishers, agencies, and institutions such as the Overseas Press Club; home to photojournalism meccas such as The Photo District and The International Center of Photography, as well as major newspapers and many photo-driven magazines.

WASHINGTON, D.C.
The National Geographic Society; site of the annual Pictures of the Year (International) Awards ceremony and exhibition.

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA
Duke University Center for Documentary Studies; headquarters for the National Press Photographers Association.

DELRAY BEACH, FLORIDA
The Palm Beach Photographic Center and Workshop hosts the annual Foto-fusion photography festival.

ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA
The Poynter Institute for Journalism offers seminars in visual journalism.

PARIS, FRANCE
Historically the European capital of photography, where agencies and foreign correspondents have bloomed; home to Henri Cartier-Bresson, ninety-three, father of "The Decisive Moment," and co-founder of Magnum Photos; Maison Européenne de la Photographie; Centre National de la Photographie (founded by Robert Delpire, publisher of Robert Frank's *The Americans*); Mois de la Photographie (Biennial).

AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS
Site of World Press Photo, a supporter of photojournalism and host of the prestigious World Press Photo Awards.

MOSCOW, RUSSIA
Annual Interfoto gathering, which this year will focus on the photojournalism of "war and peace."

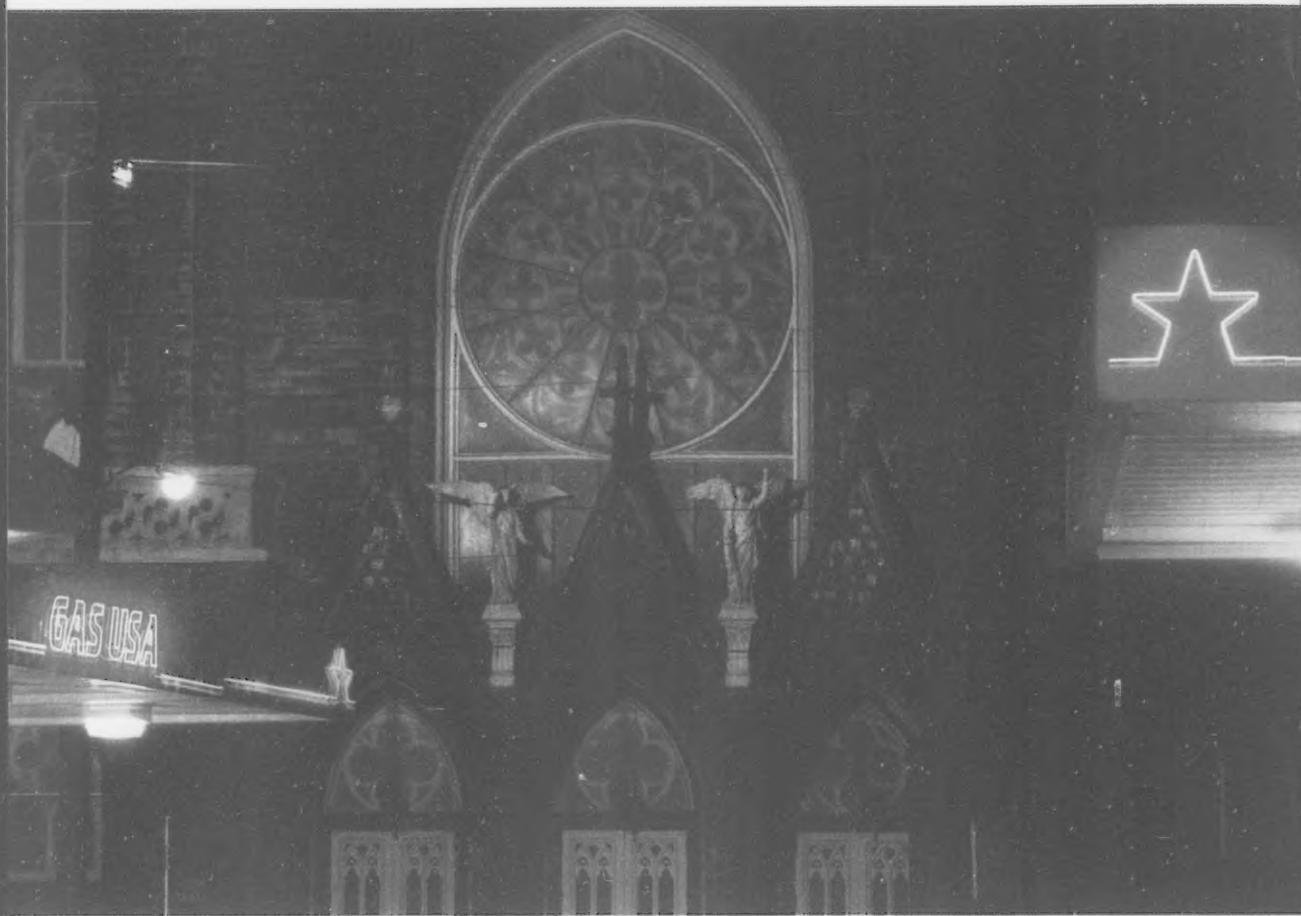
COLOGNE, GERMANY
Annual Photokina trade show for photo technology.

MILAN, ITALY
A center of photographic book publishing.

PERPIGNAN, FRANCE
Site of Visa Pour L'Image Festival, devoted exclusively to photojournalism.

BAMAKO, MALI
African Photography festival highlights the photography of a different African nation each year.

VIRTUAL CAPITALS
cameraworks.com — *The Washington Post's* award-winning site
digitaljournalist.org — Forum and features by and for Net-savvy photojournalists
journale.com — "Real stories from planet Earth"
msnbc.com — Showcase for the "Week in Pictures"
nytimes.com — Excellent photojournalistic treatment
pdn-pix.com — Photo District News, bible of the New York photographer
pixelpress.org — Internet photo stories, exhibitions, resources
red-top.com — Innovative independent photo stories
reportage.org — "The on-line magazine of photojournalism"
zonezero.com — "From analog to digital photography"
f8.com — dedicated to "photographic, interactive, ... and democratic" journalism
foto8.com — "Thought-provoking photo stories by the world's top photojournalists"



ST. MICHAEL'S: New layers pressing against old ones.

MIKE LEVY

Seeing Cleveland

BY JANE GOTTLIEB

When the wind comes from the south, airplanes approach Hopkins International Airport from the east, right over downtown Cleveland. When six or seven stack up they form the pattern Mike Levy wants to photograph. He had shot tests so he'd be ready when the wind shifted.

"I use a long exposure," he explains, "and the aircraft will create a line of lights passing over the city."

With that image, Levy expected to complete his essay on how planes have been perceived since they were used to destroy the World Trade Center. Levy was also finishing an essay on Cleveland billboards, all the while keeping an eye out for different views of his city's cherished churches. He had a list of projects to get to.

Levy works for *The Plain Dealer* in Cleveland, which is changing the status quo by using pictures to tell, and not just supple-

ment, the story. "I am a hometown boy," he says. "I'm connected here and these are stories I can tell as a documentary photographer."

A compact man at once quiet and anxious to share his thoughts, Levy has a knack for pinpointing the crucial, sometimes awful, moments associated with the news. On one occasion, his front-page photo of a woman first seeing the body of her son, who had been killed by a train, triggered an outcry and an editor's note of explanation. Levy appreciates news, but were he just reacting, instead of initiating stories, he would probably no longer be at a newspaper.

"News or sports or portraits, I can do those, and I like to," he says. "But my essays are my art."

Many newsrooms would not provide the open canvas a photojournalist like Levy needs for his work, a hybrid of news and personal insight. But Levy, who was warned in college that he would not fit in at newspapers, has found a workplace that has made room rather than asking him to fit in.

He has been with the 362,000-circulation *Plain Dealer* since 1991, coming home after stints with *The Seattle Times* and *The Arizona Republic*. He has been Ohio News Photographer of the Year four times. Kent State University Press will soon publish a book of his Cleveland landscapes. In his eleven years at the paper, Levy has been sent to South Africa, Russia, Israel, and France. He covered two World Series. His three daughters have grown to adolescence. Levy divorced, took up in-line skating, shaved his head, and began the mural of tattoos that now take up most of both arms. Always, he watched his city.

Here, as at most newspapers, film gave way to electronic images during this period. New management, led by editor Douglas Clifton, began using photos without letting words get in the way. "The newspaper was very dense, very type heavy. It did not seem to value the visual side of storytelling," says Clifton, who came three years ago from the *Miami Herald*. "It was not a matter of hiring eighteen hotshots. What we did was awaken the talent we had." Clifton redesigned the paper. He hired an assistant managing editor exclusively for visuals, David Kordalski, who supervises a staff that includes thirty photographers, picture editors, and technicians.

Plain Dealer photographers generate visual essays and multi-part series to which writers might or might not contribute. Reporters sometimes tighten stories to make room for more or bigger photographs. Occasionally, photos run but not the story initially assigned. Weekend stories can include eight or more images; Sunday magazine essays still more. In this new climate, reporters have heard lectures on the difference between "informational" and "intimate" pictures. "Talking head" photos are discouraged, as are reporters who refer to the person with the camera as "my" photographer.

"It was tough for the reporters who think they're the real journalists in the paper," says Connie Schultz, a feature writer who collaborates closely with photographers on lengthy series.

At the *Plain Dealer*, photographers are assigned according to their strengths. For Mike Levy it means plenty of time between daily assignments to comb the neighborhoods, and even the sky, for the views he wants to recreate. "It's such a great situation," he says. "Every day I wake up and I can't believe they're paying me to do this."

Photographs became a fixture of American newspapers in the 1920s. At first, they were studio portraits, often hand-tinted to look decorative. During Prohibition, photographers outfitted with big box cameras were dispatched late at night to catch gangland violence. "They had no journalism training," says Kenny Irby, a photographer and visual group leader with the Poynter Institute for Media Studies. "They came from the service department and someone from the newsroom told them what they wanted."

The documentary style that found its way into picture magazines during the Depression largely missed newspapers, which stuck to single images. Irby says even the legendary newspaper photos of World War II caught decisive moments, but did not



LEVY

aim to tell a broader story. By the 1950s, a few regional papers in the South began to run photo pages documenting the early civil rights movement. Others followed, but Irby says newspapers continued to use pictures largely to amplify words.

In the early 1980s, when newspapers were both prosperous and in the mood to experiment, photography finally began to gain recognition as a mode of storytelling in daily journalism. The *Detroit Free Press* and other heartland papers published picture stories. The Associated Press introduced computer picture transmission, which allowed news editors to quickly view a variety of photographs. Newspapers invested in better cameras and long lenses. They distributed them to photographers increasingly coming out of journalism and art schools.

Among them was Mike Levy, who graduated in 1982 from Ohio University with a bachelor's in fine arts in visual communication. A native of the Cleveland suburb of University Heights, he had made money taking pictures since high school, when his father, who worked in public relations, paid him to take portraits of potato chip industry executives. Levy also shot sports for The Associated Press. He expected to pursue sports photography until learning in college about Dorothea Lang, Walker Evans, and Lewis Hines. He was moved by how powerfully the camera captured humanity.

He worked for the *Olathe (Kansas) Daily News* and several other small papers before moving on to Phoenix and Seattle. But Levy always felt most comfortable in Cleveland.

'My essays are my art'

By the 1990s, the national enthusiasm for photographic reporting had cooled, replaced by attention to the bottom line and a preoccupation with the new color presses and packaging.

"That was the trend nationally, and we felt it in Cleveland," Levy says. "We had this brand new toy, these color presses. We had to show it to the world and lost sight of what's important."

At the *Plain Dealer* a visual technology editor, David Petkiewicz, was brought in as a liaison between the photographers and the production team. Details down to the amount of ink laid on the page were carefully checked. New digital cameras provided greater color range. Technical staff people were taught why they needed to work hard on a difficult picture to bring out the nuances the photographer intended.

Earlier this year, digital cameras replaced traditional cameras altogether, allowing photographers to quickly transmit work from the field on the laptop computers.

The filmless world appeals to Levy, who like many photographers appreciates the autonomy it brings. He has one of the rare jobs in newspapers. Irby says that in spite of the strides made twenty years ago, newspapers, largely corporate-owned and rigid, do not free up photographers to go out and look for stories. "There's a small minority out there I can count with two hands that uses photography for more than informational purposes," he says. "There are so few opportunities right now."

There was no apparent reason to turn in at the public housing project off Woodlawn, on Cleveland's east side. No story per se. Levy simply wanted to photograph the steeple of St. Edward's Church poking over the vinyl-sided apartments. He walked into a field and quietly dispatched his task, catching two worlds that nearly touch and yet seem to have nothing to do with one another.

Many of Levy's images are about Cleveland's new layers pressing against its older ones. He shows the community the buildings they might have forgotten about and neighborhoods they might never have seen. He is concerned about the interplay between spiritual beliefs and material wants. His photographs show this, and so do his tattoos. One design is a

snake wrapped around a coy fish. The fish, he explains, is swimming toward enlightenment, which the snake is disrupting. He rarely conceals his arms.

"The attitude today seems to be 'I've got mine, I've got mine.' It's very selfish," he says. "These photographs, particularly the ones that involve sacred landmarks, show the spiritual world, believing in something larger than yourself." He can identify not only Cleveland's churches but also many of its endless string of storefront ministries. In one essay, he shows all of this by night; in another he documents sacred buildings by placing them somewhere in the frame of a busy urban scene, rarely in the center and never by themselves. "These are more than pretty pictures," says the *Plain Dealer*'s photography director, Bill Gugliotta. "It is almost like looking at an abstract painting."

Other times, Levy is like an old-time documentary photographer, telling the story for a year of the homeless man he saw sleeping in the same alley week after week. Levy takes pictures he is interested in while on unrelated assignments and archives them in his computer. When he gets enough images, sometimes after years, he begins to consider them as an essay or story. On long projects, he updates editors on his progress. They don't always get it immediately.

This is clearly the case with Levy's September 11 idea. Since Cleveland has no physical scars from the terrorist attacks, Levy is searching for a conceptual story. Airplanes, he says, once largely ignored, seem scarier in the past year. Gugliotta couldn't see how this would work as a picture story. "But I know Mike," he says, "and if he's interested, he'll make a pictures that will knock you out."

Levy's dedication made a reporter, Connie Schultz, nervous when she was asked to write a story recently to go with Levy's photographs of a neighborhood adjoining the LTV steel plant after it had declared bankruptcy. "We just drove and drove around the neighborhood he shot so I could get a feel for it," says Schultz. "I had to live up to the quality of the photographs, and that's scary for a writer." ■

Jane Gottlieb is a free-lance writer in Albany who writes frequently for Photo District News.

GLAM: For a profile of some Cleveland rockers, Levy captured the musician Samantha Schartmann.



MARYANNE GOLON

Picking Shots



TIME'S EYES: Arthur Hochstein, art director, and Michele Stephenson (right), director of photography, conferring with picture editor Golon.

BY CAROLINE HOWARD

Last year MaryAnne Golon, *Time* magazine's picture editor, dispatched some of the world's best photojournalists to cover the border between Mexico and the U.S. The resulting photographs, by people like James Nachtwey, Alex Webb, and Vincent Musi, were gritty and dense, smoldering with the colors of the people and the sky and the land. Golon loved them.

But she had to fight for them. Arthur Hochstein, the magazine's art director, wanted something less photojournalistic, more stylistic. "He didn't think the photos were right for *Time*," says Michele Stephenson, the magazine's director of photography. Golon stood her ground. "Welcome to Amexica" ran thirty-two pages as the June 11, 2001, cover story.

If anyone understands how to maneuver in the complex and often cutthroat world of photojournalism, it is Golon. "MaryAnne is a very forceful personality," says Stephenson. "She is opinionated and passionate." But to become such a newsroom force has required more than passion; it has been a nineteen-year learning curve, and along the way Golon even had to quit the magazine and then come back to it.

"I left *Time* because I suffered from bloody head syndrome," Golon says. "I was like a boxer who couldn't get back into the ring. Walter Isaacson (*Time*'s managing editor then) was not exactly pro-photojournalism; it wasn't considered a 'hard element.' I needed to go where somebody thought I had something to say." So in 1996, after thirteen years at *Time*, she left for *U.S. News & World Report*, then edited by the more photo-friendly James Fallows. She returned to *Time* in 1999.

Snug again in her twenty-fourth floor office in Rockefeller Center, Golon seems to have traded her embattled early days

— "I used to be absolutely merciless" — for an I've-seen-it-all inner reserve.

Still, Golon remains best known for her conviction. Her voice has a husky drawl, a vestige of too many cigarettes and a southern childhood. She grew up the third of six children in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and graduated with a journalism degree from the University of Florida, in Gainesville, in 1983. When she was eight, her mother bought Golon her first camera with S&H green stamps. Today, her many photography awards — including a first place in 1999 for picture editing in the University of Missouri's Pictures of the Year International competition — hang on her office wall alongside the artwork and snapshots of her nine-year-old son, Christian.

A tall woman — six feet in stockings — in her early forties, Golon wears her nearly black hair in a shoulder-length fall and tends to dress in dark slacks and blazers. She exudes enthusiasm. On a Thursday afternoon in early June, the only sound in the otherwise hushed wing of the picture department is Golon's effervescent laughter. "His work was inspired!" she yells into the phone. Two more "quick" phone calls follow — about ten minutes each — before she turns her attention to one of her deputies, Hillary Raskin, who has been waiting patiently, holding laser copies of archival photos by Edward Curtis for an upcoming feature on the Lewis and Clark expedition. "Some of these rare manuscript libraries need three weeks to get a photo," Golon says, pausing to size up the pictures. "I'll knock their doors down to get the pictures if I have to."

A photo editor's job is to whittle a broad range of photography — assigned, agency, wire, archival — to fit the publication's mission and the day's news. *Time*'s nine New York-based photo editors sift through some 15,000 pictures a week, selecting about 125 for each issue.

'You have to have some underlying belief that photojournalism is important and you have to fight for it'

Golon, who is second in command behind Stephenson in the twenty-three person department, typically works on cover stories and special sections or issues. She has coordinated photos for every Olympics since 1984, was the on-site photo editor for *Time* and for *Life* during the gulf war, and led photo coverage for *Time's* stunning September 11 special issue. "Being a magazine picture editor is like being a film producer," she says. "I put together the right person with the right story, and you've got to keep everybody going toward the same thing — great visuals."

But not just great visuals. Golon and others have fought to have photography recognized as a first-class journalistic citizen, an equal. "The photo editor has to be able to speak the whole language of journalism," says Scott Sines, a managing editor of *The Spokesman-Review* in Spokane, Washington. He is one of the few picture people to break through this editorial glass ceiling. "The impression that they're not real journalists has been pounded into photo editors throughout the course of newspaper history," Sines says. "It's a form of professional discrimination."

Golon, who once wanted to be the editor of *Life* magazine, says editors often view their photographic counterparts as "necessary evils," and adds: "They see us as jovial adversaries and as representing a reduction in their real estate. But we're not just the people who say, 'Make the picture bigger.' At the bottom of it, we're all journalists. Certain stories you want to read, so we lightly illustrate it. In other places, what are you going to say? The pictures say everything. You have to know when to back off." Golon takes a breath. "I was a lot more volatile in my youth. Now I'm more of a diplomat."

David Burnett, a photojournalist who has shot for *Time* since 1967, would stick "savvy" in front of "diplomat." In 1995 he went to Golon to discuss a sports essay he wanted to do that was more about capturing the poetry and energy of sport than about featuring famous athletes. Golon, he says, loved the idea, and the coming 1996 summer Olympics in Atlanta made it timely.

Burnett's photos were stunning, but would the editors like them? Golon and Burnett hatched a plan to ensure that they would. They made sixteen-by-twenty prints — far bigger than a usual presentation — for final review. "We did it so big to wow them," Burnett says. "I was totally comfortable to let MaryAnne take the ball." The essay ran twelve pages.

On September 11, Golon was at home in Bergen County, New Jersey, when she first heard of the attacks from Stephenson, who called from Maine, where she was vacationing. On her three-hour journey into Manhat-

tan that morning (it typically takes forty-five minutes), Golon made several dozen cellular phone calls to orchestrate the coverage. Eventually, she had about twenty-five photographers in the field. Hundreds of amateurs, including some firefighters, walked the three-and-a-half miles to Rockefeller Center from Ground Zero in the hopes of having their photos published. No amateur shots were used in *Time's* photoladen, ad-free special edition, which hit newsstands on September 13, but in the next issue a photo taken by an assistant state attorney general ran as a three-page foldout. *Time's* photo editors reviewed at least 15,000 pictures that day.

Golon's standard on September 11, though, was "the same as any other story," she says. "The best pictures just jump off the light table and knock the doors down." The issue won a National Magazine Award and a first place for editing in the Pictures of the Year International contest. "We're trained to respond to extraordinary situations," Golon says of her staff. "We knew exactly who to call and what to get organized."

Knowing whom to call is something of a Golon specialty. "This business is built on personal relationships," says Stephenson. "MaryAnne's success that day comes from a reputation she has built through the years." That reputation also makes Golon someone photographers trust. Robert Clark, whose images of the second plane hitting the south tower of the World Trade Center — taken from the roof of his Brook-

lyn apartment — won a first-place in the World Press Photo contest, knew exactly where to go with his film. "In my heart I knew that MaryAnne would do the right thing," he says.

Golon also made full use of AOL Time Warner's deep pockets. Clark, for instance, says he got about \$10,000 from *Time* just for a first look at his still-unprocessed film. By the end of the day — and roughly \$50,000 later — *Time* had exclusive worldwide rights for a week. Golon declined to discuss how much she spent on September 11. "Business is my least favorite part of my job and the singularly most important part of my job," she says. "There used to be a time where the only relationship that mattered was between the editor and the photographer. It was all based on trust and handshakes. That is becoming a distant memory."

There may have been a time when Golon would have fought this changing reality. Today, she picks her battles, but her fundamental belief that photojournalism is crucial has never wavered. "You have to work for it and support it," Golon says, pushing herself up in her chair. "And I've done that. I've never lost the faith." ■

Caroline Howard was a picture editor for ten years. She is now an editor at Working Mother magazine.



DID YOU RUN THIS PHOTO?

BY MARINA ARTUSA

On September 11 Richard Drew, an Associated Press photographer for thirty-two years, was near the north tower of the World Trade Center when he saw, through his camera lens, a tall, dark-skinned man in a white jacket and black pants falling head-first from the sky. He got chills. Drew squeezed off two or three frames.

Of the 215 pictures of death and panic Drew shot that day, this image was the one that no one could forget. It captured what Henri Cartier-Bresson, the father of photojournalism, called the "decisive moment."

It also created controversy that Drew has struggled to understand. "People jumped from the building," Drew says. "You can write about it but you can't show a picture of it."

His photo of the tall man — which won a prize this year in the World Press Photo Contest — has been published and debated around the world. Editors had to make difficult decisions about whether to run Drew's photo and others like it. Many of those who chose to publish it heard from angry readers who thought it inappropriate. But editors defend the decisions. The New York *Daily News* gave a full page to Susan Watt's shot of another man falling. "This picture was part of the story and we shouldn't shield our readers from it," says Eric Meskauskas, the *News's* photo editor.

The reaction to Drew's photo prompted the *Toronto Globe and Mail* to attempt to identify the falling man. Peter Cheney, the *Globe and Mail* reporter who was in New York covering the terrorist attacks, saw Norberto Hernandez's face among the posters of missing peo-



AP WIDEWORLD/RICHARD DREW

ple posted all over Manhattan in the weeks after September 11, and thought he could be the man in the photo. Hernandez was a pastry chef at Windows on the World, the doomed restaurant on the 107th floor of the North Tower. Cheney contacted Hernandez's family, and one of his sisters and one of his brothers told Cheney that they had both felt a shock of recognition when they saw the photo (the sister has since said she was mistaken). Others in the family did not want to talk to the press.

Whether it is Hernandez or not, Drew remains convinced that his photo added something important to the story of what happened that day. "I didn't capture this person's death. I captured part of his life. This is what he decided to do, and I think I preserved that." ■

Marina Artusa, a journalism student at Columbia on September 11, is a staff writer for Clarin, in Buenos Aires.

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SCOTT PETERSON/GETTY IMAGES

RON HAVIV

Shooting War

BY JOSHUA LIPTON

Hiding between a cab and the trailer of an abandoned truck, Ron Haviv looked through the lens of his camera as the rifles fired and the blood spilled.

Zeljko Raznatovic, the notorious Serbian militia leader better known as Arkan, was patrolling the deserted streets of Bijeljina, a town in northeastern Bosnia, with his killing squads of "Tigers." It was April 1992. Haviv had asked Arkan if he could roll with the unit and Arkan had agreed. "Arkan really thought he could control the media, that he was very smart, and that nobody could really screw him," Haviv explains.

SEEING WAR: Ron Haviv takes cover (above) as journalists come under fire south of Kabul. In Bosnia (right), his picture of a Serb militia member kicking a dying woman.

Three busloads of Tigers hunted Bosnian Muslims house to house, finally arriving at the center of the town, where they searched a mosque. They tore down a flag colored with Islamic symbols, proudly displaying it like a trophy. Screams echoed through the neighborhood. Haviv watched as other gunmen dragged the town butcher and his wife from their home. He slipped from view about thirty feet from Arkan's men and began snapping photographs. Shots were fired. The butcher, middle-aged and defenseless, fell to the ground. His wife bent down next to him, placing her hand over his chest, trying to stop the bleeding. Again a rifle shot rang out. The woman crumpled to the pavement. The Serbs then pulled the woman's sister out of the house, executing her as well.

Haviv knew that to document the crime he had to capture the Tigers and their victims in the same frame. As soldiers started to leave the scene, Haviv wandered into the open. Just then a young Serbian soldier, sunglasses tilted back on his head, cigarette burning in his left hand, casually walked over to the dying family of Bosnians, raised his black boot and, as Haviv took aim, kicked one of the women in the head. "When he kicked her," Haviv would say later, "it was like the ultimate disrespect for everything."

Quickly unloading the film, Haviv hid the incriminating rolls, just in case, and later smuggled them out of the bloodied town. Magazines and newspapers around the world published the pictures, the first documented evidence of atrocities occurring in the region, eyewitness proof of Serbian war crimes. The image of the soldier kicking the woman in Bijeljina "was the most important picture in the conflict," says Chuck Sudetic, a friend of Haviv's and a former *New York Times* reporter who covered the Balkans between 1990 and 1995. "You had lots of descriptions of events coming your way, but where was the real sound evidence? Here was this set of pictures coming in from up there in the north where I couldn't get, and it underscored the reality. It gave lots of reports we had heard great credibility."

The photographs also caught the attention of Arkan. The paramilitary gunman fumed,



'You had lots of descriptions of events coming your way, but where was the real sound evidence?'

publicly crying that he wanted to taste Haviv's blood. Serbian thugs later abducted the photojournalist, handcuffed and beat him. American, French, and Russian diplomats brokered his release three days later.

Haviv returned home to New York City for about a month, rested and regrouped. Then he flew back to Sarajevo. The torturous experience had only steeled his resolve. "In the end it just reaffirmed my dedication to doing what I was doing," he says. "It kept me going to a certain degree."

For ten years, between 1991 and 2001, Haviv photographed the genocidal breakup of Yugoslavia, from Croatia to Kosovo and beyond. His book, *Blood and Honey: A Balkan War Journal*, captures the cruelties of ethnic rage —

Srebrenica's mass graves; starved, hollow-eyed young men in Bosnian prison camps; snow soaked red with the blood of an elderly Serb.

Why pursue war? Haviv says that he has both selfish and altruistic reasons. "The selfish part is that it's amazing to be there in these places, to watch history unfold before you," he says. More broadly, though, Haviv believes that photographing war and disaster pushes the international community to confront abuse and end injustice. Sometimes pictures generate immediate reaction from world leaders. Other times, it takes longer. "In Sarajevo, for instance, there was myself, my colleagues — for four years we kept saying, 'Look what's going on! Look at the pictures. Listen to the radio. Watch the televi-

RON HAVIV VI



sion. Read the reports.' It was basically ignored. Nobody was really paying attention. But, now ten years later, that work exists as evidence to prove to people that it did happen. We can play a historical role in terms of documentation." In fact, prosecutors at the Hague requested the Bijeljina photos as they investigated Slobodan Milosevic and his supporters. And a *Blood and Honey* exhibit of Haviv's work is now a permanent exhibit in the historical museum in Sarajevo, seen there by many students, as well as a traveling exhibit. "I'm very positive about using it as a shock treatment," Haviv says, "to say to the kids, 'If you don't grow up with an open mind, this can happen again.'"

Given the bombs and blood he tracks around the world, you might expect Haviv to exude a Rambo-like presence, but he's a mild-mannered, thirty-six-year-old photojournalist who takes in the world through soft brown eyes framed by a gentle face and a black mop of unkempt curls. A native New Yorker, Haviv studied journalism as an undergraduate at New York University. He enjoyed photography as a relaxing hobby at first, but that offhand interest quickly developed into a passion. He felt himself drawn to the universality of the visual. "Images can have often more of an immediate impact and reach a broader number of people, especially crossing languages, which I think is important," Haviv says. "I'm not just working specifically for an English-speaking audience. My images are seen in Germany and France and Italy. Photographs are much more universal in their ability to communicate."

After graduating in 1987, Haviv got some assignments from Agence France-Presse, supplementing his income as a bicycle messenger and Good Humor man. His career took off in 1989 when he became friendly with Chris Morris, a battle-tested war photographer for *Time*. Morris invited Haviv to tag along to cover the Panamanian presidential election in 1989. When General Manuel Noriega nullified the election results, riots exploded in the streets as rival parties clashed. Haviv photographed the Panamanian vice president being stabbed and beaten.

The dramatic image made the covers of *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News & World Report*, and encouraged Haviv to pursue conflict photography as a profession. "It kind of registered in my mind that you could do something valuable here," Haviv says, "that this could be really interesting for me, and have an effect on the world."

Today, as a contract photographer for *Newsweek* and represented by the VII Photo Agency, Haviv parachutes into the world's hot spots, covering drug wars in Colombia, refugees in Rwanda, political earthquakes in Haiti. He spent three months last fall photographing the war in Afghanistan. His new book from those months, *Afghanistan: The Road To Kabul*, showcases the dramatic sweep of wartime experience. Mixed in with the upsetting scenes — a one-legged girl, the victim of a minefield, or bandaged, shrapnel-scarred soldiers — are uplifting images, of smiling Afghans playing a game of volleyball, or a group of young men earnestly trying to study on a deserted field of gravel and sand.

Still, it is the Balkan conflict that remains closest to Haviv's heart, both because of the number of years he spent chronicling that war, and because he feels that the rest of Europe and the United States need to understand that conflict in order to avoid repeating the tragedy. "The people in the Balkans were

ETHNIC CLEANSING: Haviv's picture of a carefully defaced Bosnian family photo "really shows what that war was about," he says, "the attempt to wipe out the identity of another group of people."

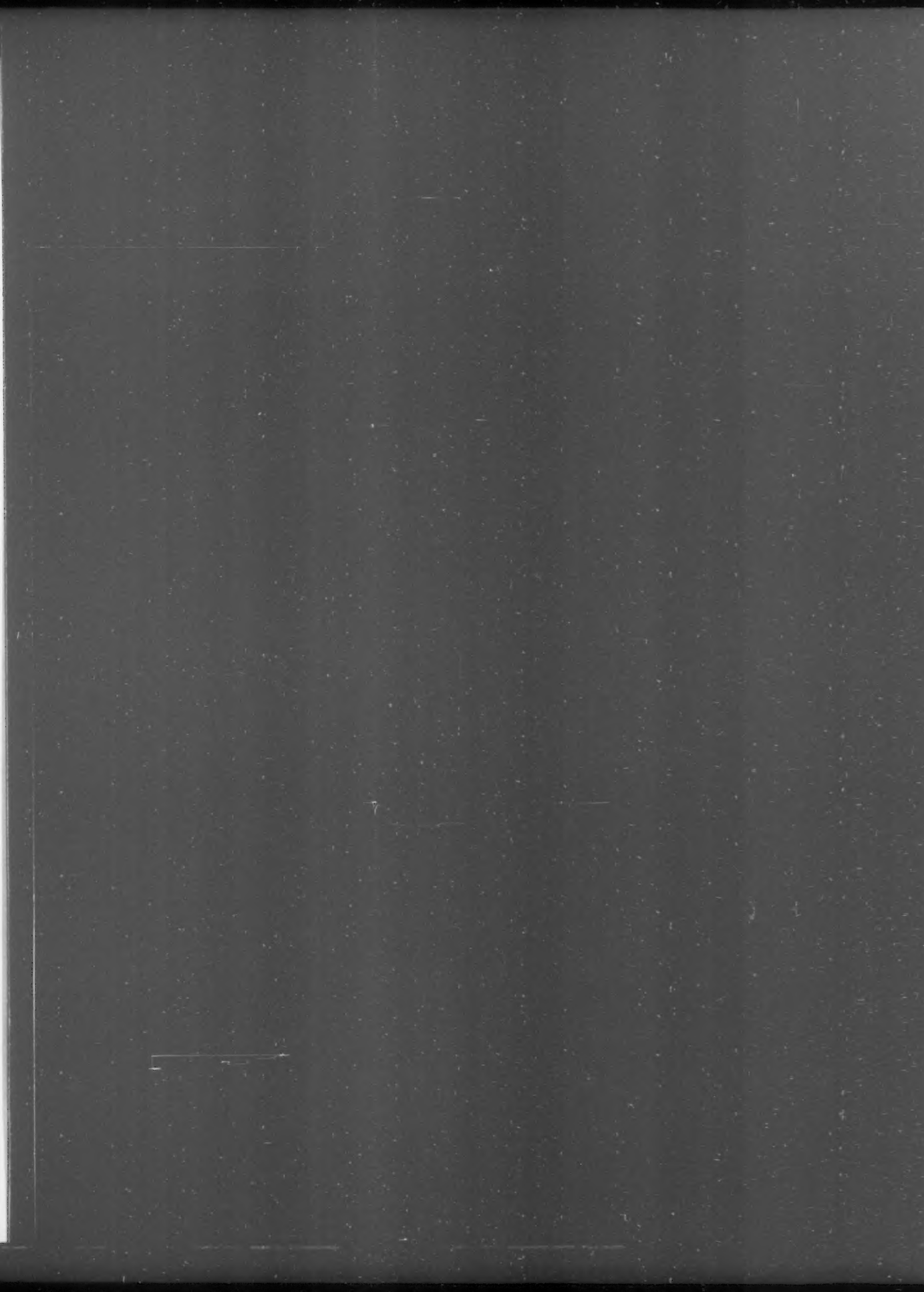


RON HAVIV VII

just like somebody in New York City or Los Angeles," he says. "You could interchange them very easily. It struck me that given the right circumstances, that could easily happen in France or the United States." Haviv continues traveling throughout the Balkans, bearing witness through his lens. He took pictures of the outbreak of fighting in Macedonia last year, and stood outside the home of Milosevic to photograph the former Serb president as he was arrested.

A decade of photographing war has left Haviv somewhat more measured about what he thinks the craft of photojournalism can accomplish. "I don't think that I ever thought, 'Wow, photography can totally change the world by itself,'" he says. "But I totally believe that there is a political process that occurs, and that photojournalism absolutely plays a role, and an important role." ■

Joshua Lipton is an assistant editor at *CJR*.





WAR PHOTOGRAPHERS AND STRESS

BY ANTHONY FEINSTEIN
AND JOHN OWEN

In May 2000, we embarked on a series of studies addressing the question of how war journalists deal emotionally with the pressures and stresses of working in zones of conflict. The hazards inherent in this occupation were immediately brought home to us. A package of questionnaires en route to Miguel Gil Moreno in Sierra Leone would never be answered. Days after they were sent, forwarded by the AP television news (APTN) office in London, Moreno and his Reuters colleague Kurt Schork were murdered not far from the capital, Freetown. Their violent deaths would not be the last before the first phase of our study was completed. They did, however, reinforce the need for a study examining the psychological well-being of war journalists. Until we began collecting data, nothing empirical had been published on the subject. Readers wanting a better understanding of the lives of this intrepid group of men and women could read personal memoirs, where catchy titles like *Live from the Battlefield* and *The Bang-Bang Club* provided informative, at times shocking, insights. Useful as the memoirs were, their intensely subjective content did not necessarily apply to the entire profession. Extrapolating from individual experience is not a substitute for detailed, rigorous group observations.

What befell two experienced journalists like Schork and Moreno galvanized several news organizations into supporting our investigation. With the help of the BBC, CNN, Reuters, APTN, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the names of 170 journalists were forwarded to us. Of these, 140 (83 percent) agreed to participate, which involved completing a series of detailed questionnaires and, for one in five of the journalists, undergoing a structured interview. To provide a framework for comparison, a control group of 107 domestic journalists, never exposed to war, was also enrolled.

The results indicated that war jour-

nalists had significantly more post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and psychological distress. Moreover, the rate of PTSD in the war group over the course of their working lives far exceeded that in traumatized firefighters and police officers, and approximated that recorded in combat veterans.

Particularly vulnerable are photographers. "If your pictures are not good enough, you are not close enough," observed Robert Capa. Given that exposure to grave personal danger is closely allied to the development of PTSD, we returned to our original data set and examined the profiles of still photographers.

War photographers are, in fact, few in number. Our sample consisted of seventeen, only two of whom were female. Twelve were either single or divorced, a high number given their average age of thirty-seven. To help interpret the psychological data, we selected a control group of twenty-four print reporters, whose demographics matched the photographers closely (except in the area of education). The most striking behavioral observation was the high frequency of PTSD symptoms described by the photographers.

The disorder encompasses three distinct sets of symptoms: (1) re-experiencing phenomena, e.g., flashbacks, dreams, involuntary intrusive images; (2) avoidant symptoms, e.g., an avoidance of feelings, activities, places associated with the trauma and an emotional distancing from friends and family; (3) hyperarousal features, e.g., exaggerated startle response, hypervigilance, irritability.

Heightened risk may be one reason for these elevated scores in photographers. Another reason may relate to the nature of the image captured. All the photographers spoke of periodically filming scenes of such grotesqueness that they knew the photos would never be published. Notwithstanding editorial sensitivities and public squeamishness, they felt compelled to record a visual testament. Those images never

went anywhere other than to the repository of their memories, where over time, their collective weight ensured intrusion into dreams and unwanted recollections. A memorable interview with Don McCullin aired on CNN in 1998 attests to this. Looking back over a stellar career, a somber McCullin appears haunted by the many images of death and bereavement that have passed in front of his lens. *Sleeping with Ghosts* is the apt title for a collection of his photographs.

War photography, by its nature, may attract individuals who seek out risk, danger, and the adrenaline rush, thereby predisposing them to PTSD. Such a reductionist explanation does not, however, do justice to the complexity of issues motivating war photographers. In face to face interviews, they enumerated: a commitment to a story; wanderlust combined with particular discovery of talent as a photographer under hazardous conditions; a feeling of comfort in zones of conflict because of an upbringing in a dysfunctional family. Furthermore, what motivated an individual at the beginning of his or her career often differed from what spurred that person on a decade later. An early motivation may have been the lure of adventure, but in time this lessened, to be replaced by a strong desire to bear witness.

Two final observations: First, photographers reported significantly more physical illnesses than print reporters — perhaps a consequence of high levels of stress. Second, emotional difficulties in photographers were often unrecognized and untreated. This troubling fact, applicable to war journalists in general, should come as a wake-up call to photographers and news bosses alike. ■

Anthony Feinstein is an associate professor in the department of psychiatry at the University of Toronto. John Owen is the former European director of the Freedom Forum. He teaches journalism at the City University's graduate school of journalism in London. This study was funded, in part, by the Freedom Forum.

ANDRE LAMBERTSON

Engaging the World



MARTA MENDEZ

BY JOHN GIUFFO

Six months after graduating from the International Center of Photography, Andre Lambertson pawned two of his cameras. His first year out of school was a rough one, and the work came in fits and starts. But he kept one, and he continued to work on a number of personal projects he had started as a student. He had no buyer, no place to publish. At that early point in his career, Lambertson took photographs because he felt he had to. "They were all issues I was concerned with — particularly stuff in the black community," Lambertson says, referring to his early photos, including a series he did about Vietnam veterans who lived on the streets of Coney Island. Thirteen years later, he's among the most sought-after photo essayists in the country, and his work has appeared in *Time*, *Life*, and *The New York Times Magazine*, among others. His cameras still pay his rent, but these days he gets to keep them.

From the beginning, he was driven to tell stories about people who enter the mainstream consciousness only as objects of pity or sources of fear. He's drawn to lives that are damaged and destroyed by poverty, crime, drugs, and familial decay. Many of his photos feature families in very private situations: a son helping his mother shoot heroin, or a brother watching his sister die of AIDS. Shadows haunt the corners of many of the frames. "It became my way of being in the world," he says.

Lambertson's youthful features and short dreads belie his forty years. He originally wanted to be a writer, but that changed when he took a photography class at the University of Virginia. "The thing I liked about photography was that it brought me into contact with people," he says. A year studying at the ICP, an internship at *The Village Voice*, and freelance assignments for *The New York Times* followed. Much of the work he did for the *Voice* reflected his social concerns, and that in turn led to a job at the *Baltimore Sun* in 1995.

"A lot of the stuff I wound up doing was sports and fashion," he says of his three-year stint at the paper. "It was fun because it was a challenge for a while. But after a while you want to keep growing." His desire to return to more serious themes reasserted itself after an assignment for a *Sun* fashion feature. Lambertson went to take pictures of a woman who had a flair for hats at the funeral home she owned. Trying to get the right shot, he says, "I backed into a casket, and in this casket was a young boy, like twelve or thirteen years old" — a victim of violence. "I freaked out, and she said this isn't all that rare."

Lambertson began to research Baltimore crime and found a side of his adopted city that he hadn't experienced. "I found out that Baltimore was near the top in youth violence," he says. "I'd read the paper and if there was a shooting or a stabbing and a youth was involved, I would try to go to the hospital. And if it was a funeral, I would just show up." His editors at the *Sun* had no idea what he was doing outside of work hours until one day, while he was shooting at a local hospital, a p.r. representative contacted his editor to verify his identity. "My editors were like, 'Andre, what's this mysterious project?'" Lambertson showed his personal work, and his editors liked it so much they ran a few of the photos. (Go to www.digitaljournalist.org/issue0004/andreintro.htm to see these and other photos by Lambertson.)

That photo series won second place in the 1996 Pictures of the Year International competition, sponsored by the Missouri journalism school, and it wasn't long until colleagues were encouraging him to return to New York to try to sell some work. It was good advice. He returned in 1998 and has worked consistently as a free-lancer ever since.

"His execution is almost always moving and imaginative," says David Friend, editor of creative development at *Vanity Fair*, who gave Lambertson one of his first magazine assignments, in early 1996, when he was the director of photography at *Life*. "I liked his attitude," Friend explains. "He's got a bright personality, a spiritual side that comes through."

Among Lambertson's favorite assignments is a series he did for *Time* on Bill Tones, a Catholic priest who has worked with kids in Chicago's worst housing project. "If



FAMILY AFFAIR: a pair of brothers shoot each other up with heroin while their mother looks out the window.

two gangs were at war with each other, Tomes would stand in the middle of them while they were shooting. He said he would love the guy who shot him more than anyone else," says Lambertson. "I said, 'I've got to meet this guy.'"

While he shares with Tomes a desire to help people through his work, Lambertson admits that it's not always easy to reconcile that with his role as photographer. "There was a time when it really messed with my head because my career could change, but nothing happened to *them*," he says. "Their lives didn't change."

"Photography becomes so personal. When does it become ego? When does it become about yourself?" He says he came to understand that he couldn't help everyone, and that his photography wouldn't — couldn't — change the world, but along with that came a realization that even having a small positive impact on another person was enough. "If I could offer a guy some friendship or a couple months of sobriety . . . whatever's possible, you know?"

Lambertson is concerned with being pigeonholed as a chronicler of poverty and pain, so he welcomes assignments that give him a chance to tell stories without the vocabulary of despair he usually employs. "I happen to think there's an over-saturation of negative images, and I know that in my soul I need to see more positive things," he says.

He got the chance to do just that on a number of trips to Sierra Leone earlier this year. The West African country's brutal civil war had ended in January, and Lambertson decided to document one child soldier's path back home to the family

from which he'd been torn. He found what his soul needed. "You start meeting like minds," he says, referring to the other aid workers, photographers, and journalists who are helping to mend the country and tell its story. "There are all these people whose hearts are in the right place. It's kind of beautiful."

Lambertson teaches a class titled "Passion, Purpose and Personal Vision in Documentary Photography" at the International Center of Photography. He considers the field much more difficult to break into than it was in the late eighties and early nineties — tightened budgets, fewer magazines buying fewer photo essays — and he doesn't sugar-coat that reality for his students. He knows that only the most determined students can find success.

He's careful not to sound too discouraging, though. "You just have to believe in what you're doing," he told his class one warm spring night recently, after running through a litany of the challenges they are likely to face. He speaks from experience: back in the beginning, a month after he pawned his cameras, he bought them back with money he made from some of his photographs. He said he wasn't worried about losing them because he never lost faith in what he was doing. He may have had little choice in the matter: "Photography is the language I've chosen — or, it chose me." ■

John Giuffo is an assistant editor at CJR.

**'There's an over-saturation of negative images.
I know that in my soul I need to see more positive things.'**

GAIL FISHER

Moving Pictures

BY NEIL HICKEY

In the world of photojournalism, some long-standing boundaries are being breached — often with surprising results. In early 2000, Gail Fisher, a senior photo editor at the *Los Angeles Times*, became fascinated with the plight of the nation's 20,000 young people who "age out" of the foster care system each year — youngsters who reach their eighteenth birthday or high school graduation — and are set adrift to fend for themselves. Many end up in the streets, homeless, on welfare, or drug-addicted. About 40 percent don't graduate from high school; within two years a third have children, usually out of wedlock; and 18 percent spend time in jail.

To tell that story, Fisher followed three such youths for the entire first year of their new lives: Janea, who spent six years in foster care after trying to bludgeon her aunt with a claw hammer; Monique, the cast-off child of a heroin-addicted mother, who became an unwed mother herself at age fifteen; and Jesse, who'd been a foster care child since the sixth grade when his father punished him by putting a diaper on him and parading him around his school.

To do full justice to the foster child story, Fisher decided on an unusual strategy: she'd cover it not only with her arsenal of 35 mm still cameras, but with a video camera as well.

The resulting multimedia story, titled "Crashing Hard into Adulthood," became a page-one special report in the *Times* on December 2, 2001, with five inside pages of photos; an elabo-

rate and detailed entry on the *Times* Web site; and is scheduled to be broadcast as an entire segment of ABC News's *Nightline*, using Fisher's videotape footage. The Web pages include a photo gallery of eighty-five images, several video segments, and the full text of the series written by the *Times* reporter Phil Willon (www.latimes.com/news/la-foster-special).

The Fisher-Willon project is one of the more spectacular successes in a burgeoning journalistic movement: newspaper and magazine photographers adding an important arrow to their quiver, namely proficiency in shooting videotape to bring another dimension to their reporting. The movement had its roots in the middle 1990's when a few mavericks like Michael Rosenblum, a former CBS News producer (see sidebar), began experimenting with small video cameras to see if news for television could be covered by one person rather than the traditional five-person crew — reporter, producer, cameraman, soundman, plus a videotape editor. Other theorizers followed, most notably Dirck Halstead, a former member of the Time-Life stable of swashbuckling photojournalists. In 1997, Halstead created a Webzine called *The Digital Journalist* as an intelligencer for still photographers eager to spread their wings into video. And in 1999, he set up the Platypus Workshops — two-week boot camps to train photojournalists in the basics of video production. (Platypus: a furry, egg-laying, duck-billed hybrid discovered in Australia in the 1700s, which defied classification and thus was seen as an odd new species, neither bird, nor mammal, nor reptile.) Halstead's notion was that photojournalists, with



Gail Fisher

FRANCINE ORT

'Once you understand what's happening, you see there is no future for print photojournalism ...'



Janea, center, gyrates on the dance floor. Unadoptable, she spent six years in foster homes, mental hospitals, and lockdown facilities.

their natural eye and storytelling expertise, could learn the language of television — not to compete for the jobs of TV cameramen but to expand their own techniques of telling stories.

Gail Fisher had been a photojournalist for more than twenty years and won a phenomenal number of awards: the Robert F. Kennedy Award for outstanding coverage of disadvantaged people; acclaim from the National Press Photographers Association, the Society of Newspaper Design, the American Society of Newspaper Editors, and many others. She had earned degrees from Miami University in Ohio and from Ohio University, married, had two children (Whitney and Zachary; she's now separated from her husband), and had photo internships at the *Courier Journal & Louisville Times*, the *Dayton Journal Herald*, and the *San Bernardino Sun* before joining the *Los Angeles Times* in 1983 as a photographer on the Orange County edition.

By her own estimate, she's "the kind of person who always wants challenges, to be learning something new." Forty-eight-year-old Fisher, besides being a photo editor, is a globe-trotting still photographer — the Middle East, Vietnam, Central and South America, India, Russia, Africa, Burma. On assignment in Mongolia in 1997, she encountered scenes that needed sound and motion to convey their full impact, and which could not be captured adequately with her still cameras. Mongolia was "like a step back in time — flute music playing in the morning, smoke swirling over campfires. I thought, my gosh, I can't get all this with stills. There are so many more dimensions." She calls the experience an "awakening."

And so she found her way to Halstead's Platypus Workshop, then at the University of Oklahoma. The *Times* paid her expenses, but not before the newspaper's director of photography, Colin Crawford, expressed concern that her experimentation in a new medium might affect the quality of her still pic-

tures. He was supportive, she says, but issued a friendly warning that if he saw things in her video that weren't in her stills, that would be the end of the video.

The Platypus training was intense, long days with no distractions. "I was so frustrated that first week," Fisher remembers. "I just wasn't getting it. I had never picked up a video camera. Some very accomplished photographers were in the class; some were learning quicker than others." All the new technical information was getting in the way of her puzzling out how to tell a simple story with sound and moving pictures. By the second week, however, she was beginning to believe she might get the hang of it.

A VIDEOJOURNALIST STARTER KIT

The Canon XL-1 — a three-chip camera with three-pin grounded XLR inputs and interchangeable lenses, listing at about \$3,700. The wide-angle lens runs \$1,800. A smaller three-chip by Canon is the GL-1, for \$2,300. Sony and Panasonic also make digital cameras. A decent video tripod costs about \$300. A lavalier microphone goes for \$150. A professional wireless mic system costs \$1,000 and up. Other support gear includes lights, cables, and headphones.

The editing software, Apple's Final Cut Pro, sells for about \$800. It runs on the Apple G4 computer, with a 37GB hard drive, and a minimum of 128 megs of RAM. It can be used on the G3 with adaptations. The fire wire inputs are included in the G4 system, and the cable costs about \$40. A Sony GZ-D900 player can be added to the system for playing back and re-recording video. It costs about \$1,500.

— Source: *The Digital Journalist*

Halstead remembers her efforts this way: "Gail's first two exercises were disasters. She didn't know what she was doing or why she was there." Her final project was so good, however, that he told her in class: "You're going to be a filmmaker. You know how to tell stories. You're committed, and you'll learn more of this language as you go along."

Her first still-and-video story was the foster care piece — a home run on her first trip to the plate. She ended up with more than forty hours of videotape and, a bit overwhelmed by the task of editing it, requested the help of a Platypus instructor, Rolf Behrens. He created a ten-minute rough-cut sample, which he took to *Nightline's* executive producer, Tom Bettag, who quickly saw its value.

Photo boss Crawford now shares Fisher's enthusiasm for multimedia storytelling. A shortcoming of traditional newspapering, he points out, is that a terrific story can appear on page one for a day, and then is gone. With the Web, the piece not only reaches a broader audience, but stays around a lot longer — with value-added sound and motion. Fisher's foster care project, he says, was a perfect example of how to tell a story on multiple levels with multiple venues from newspaper to Internet to television. "With each new medium, the news consumer gains more information," he says. "Put it all together and it makes a pretty incredible package." Two other *Los Angeles Times* photographers have since completed the Platypus course.

"Crashing Hard into Adulthood" was the most challenging story she's ever done, Fisher says, "and the most rewarding." At 125 pounds and five feet, seven inches, she lugged sixty pounds of equipment: two or three still cameras, video camera, tapes, film, batteries, extra lenses, tripod. "I work out at the gym consistently, lifting free weights," she says. "You've got to be in good shape."

Underlying this evolution of a new journalistic hybrid is the conviction that traditional photojournalism, as practiced since the days of Matthew Brady, is as dead as the dodo bird. Reasons? No more magazines like *Life* and *Look*; changes in production methods at magazines like *Time* and *Newsweek* that make multipage photo stories less desirable and less necessary. Photos in

magazines these days most often simply illustrate text, rather than telling the whole story in pictures, as renowned photographers like W. Eugene Smith, David Douglas Duncan, Walker Evans, and Alfred Eisenstaedt did in their famous photo essays.

"Once you understand what's happening, you see there is no future for print photojournalism," Halstead says. "So if this is true, what do you do if you're a photographer? Throw yourself under a bus, which I considered doing when I figured this out for the first time? Go into some other line of work?"

Fortunately a few trends were under way to mitigate the gloom. The cost of small, digital video cameras and their related gear was far lower than it had been less than a decade earlier, and the equipment produced perfectly acceptable broadcast-quality images. Simultaneously, the number of cable networks was exploding, creating a demand for millions of hours of programming a year. The fractionization of the television audience meant less advertising revenue per channel and thus less money available to buy programs. Cable channels such as National Geographic, A&E, Discovery, Lifetime, the Learning Channel, and others became occasional customers for the free-lance work of video journalists who could produce programs cheaply. Internet users were acquiring broadband capability, giving them a television-like experience on their computers, with much higher-quality motion pictures and sound. All of that conspired to make the future look brighter for photojournalists who'd been demoralized for years by dwindling demand for their still pictures.

There was bad news mixed in: the potential markets for video journalism are still evolving, and they are too scattered to support all the photographers who aspire to become multimedia mavens. And some photojournalists are finding out that, no matter how hard they try, they have little knack for seeing a story in terms of motion pictures and sound. An easy transition is not guaranteed.

For true believers like Gail Fisher, however, seeing the world through the eyepiece of a video camera offers an exciting new style of practicing good old-fashioned journalism. ■

Neil Hickey is CJR's editor at large.

One 'VJ' — Doing the Work of Five

For fifteen years, he has evangelized on a single theme: namely, that television news and documentaries don't need five-person teams — reporter, producer, cameraman, soundman, editor. One trained individual can do the whole job, Michael Rosenblum maintains, and he has traveled the world doing it — and showing others how. The secret? The new generation of light, digital video cameras and related equipment that can put a person into the videojournalism business for an investment of less than \$10,000.

In 1988, Rosenblum quit CBS News because he felt that five people doing the work of one was "some kind of fraudulent activity." He taught himself to use the small cameras, and soon was contributing to *The MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour*, *Nightline*, CBS News, and other outlets. In Scandinavia, he set up several local TV news channels that ran like small-town newspapers, and in 1992 helped launch Time-Warner's non-stop, all-news cable channel, New York 1, which employs one-person "teams" of videojournalists (VJs) to cover New

York City. Like VJs everywhere, NY1's reporters use so-called three-chip cameras, which break up the visual image into three separate images, providing high-quality pictures. Home camcorders have only one chip, giving a picture that's below par for TV use.

Rosenblum has trained VJs around the world: Morocco, Eritrea, Greece, Thailand, all over Europe and the U.S. For the next three years, he'll be instructing 550 BBC journalists in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland in the secrets of solo TV news coverage. The big American networks — ABC, CBS, NBC — aren't likely to follow suit in the foreseeable future, he

says, mostly because of union resistance. But gradually, he feels certain, those news organizations will begin to accept videotaped stories from non-staff people.

"The model for this kind of journalism actually is the magazine business," he says. Thousands of magazines make money operating with tiny staffs and low budgets, with free-lancers providing virtually all of the content. "I think the vast majority of television eventually will be done in very much the same way."

If he's right, the quantity and quality of our television news diet may be in for some big changes.

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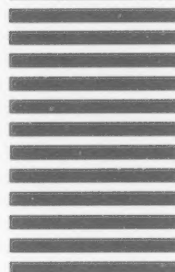
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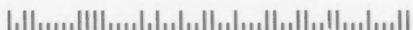
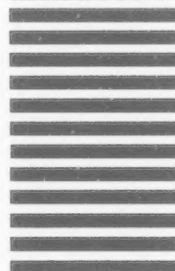
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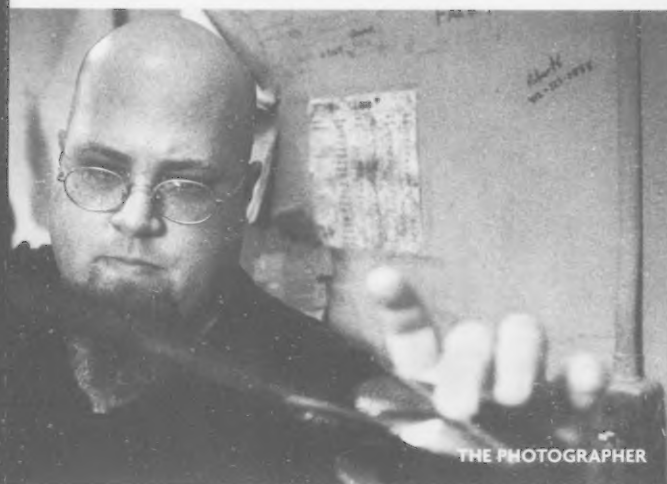
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THE PHOTOGRAPHER

ANDREW CITTO

DAVID PIERINI

Stopping Time

BY BRENT CUNNINGHAM

On David Pierini's first day as chief photographer at *The Herald* in Jasper, the priest sex scandal came to this town of 12,000 in the rolling farmlands of southern Indiana. He found himself in a church in nearby Celestine, tentatively searching for "the moment" as Father Michael Allen, or "Father Mike," confessed to his parishioners that twenty-six years ago he had sexual relations with a sixteen-year-old boy. "It was awkward," says Pierini, whose ample girth, clean-shaven head, and long auburn goatee make it hard to be inconspicuous. "I thought they would kick me out. These are people who know me from more positive moments."

Father Mike showed little emotion as he spoke, and



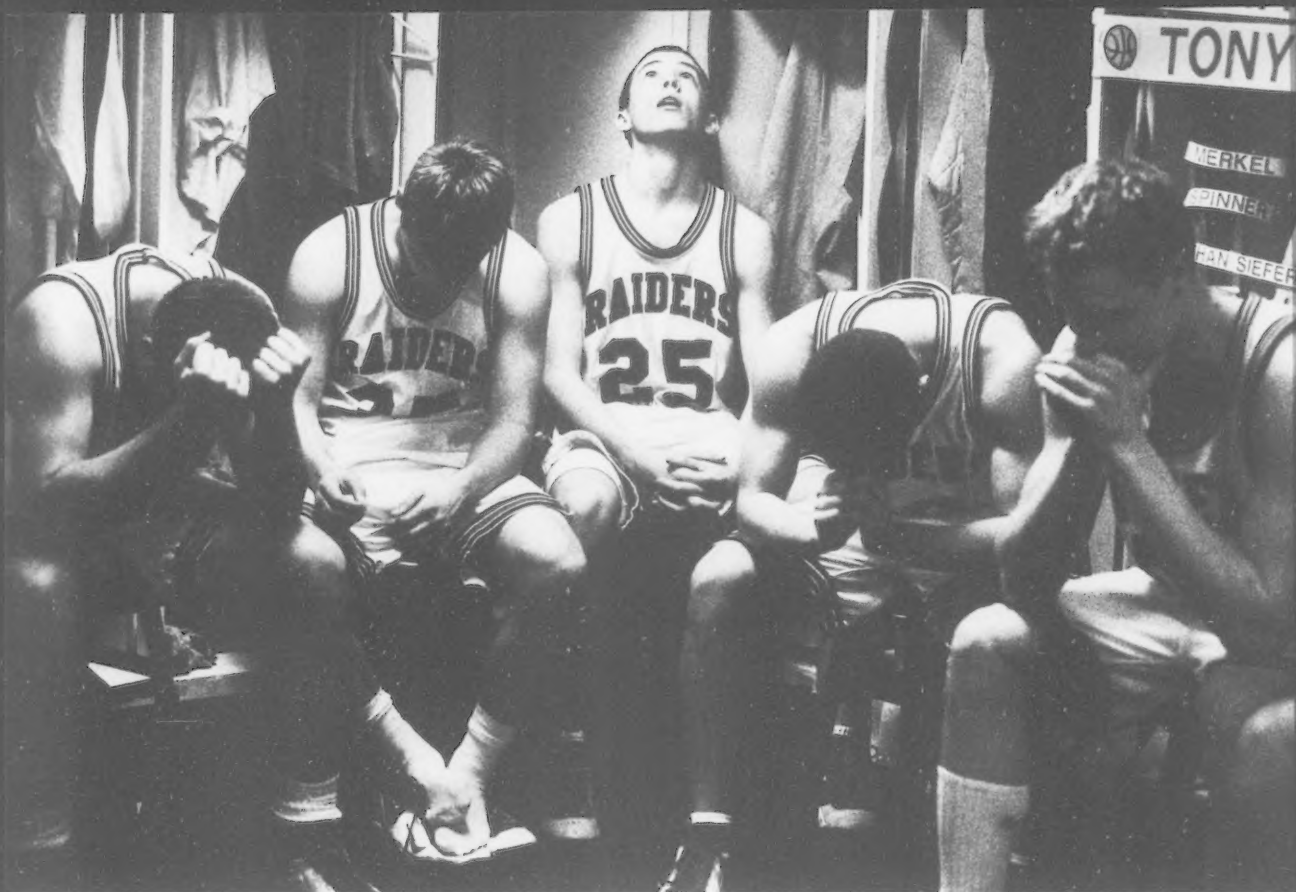
FATHER MIKE

Pierini's shots were ordinary. When the priest finished speaking, though, the congregation erupted unexpectedly with a standing ovation and Father Mike sat on a pew and wept. The "moment." But Pierini was on the wrong side of the church, his view blocked by a stand of parishioners. He maneuvered into position in time to snap a few shots of Father Mike in profile, head in his hand, framed by the blurry contours of his forgiving flock.

"I knew that was the picture," Pierini says, but he worried that people would consider his eagerness to get it inappropriate. "It isn't 'get the shot at all costs' here." Jasper readers understand the role of the press, he says, but they also trust *The Herald's* judgment and respect for boundaries. "I realize that philosophy would probably be scrutinized by a big-city editor."

But Pierini, who has been taking pictures for *The Herald* for four years, doesn't work for a big-city editor. He works for John Rumbach. And when he talks about judgment and philosophy, he is talking about Rumbach's as much as his own. In the case of Father Mike, that judgment produced a dramatic front-page photo that distills all the agony and power of the story into a single frame, and it was had without trampling the dignity of the predominantly Catholic community around Jasper. The kind of photo that has become *The Herald's* signature.

Over the last twenty-nine years, the fifty-one-year-old Rumbach, who is *The Herald's* co-publisher (along with his cousin) as well as its editor, turned his paper — the family business since 1919 — into a refuge for young photojournalists. They go there because *The Herald*, with a circulation of 12,600 and an editorial staff of seventeen, is that rarest of



HOOSIERS: A photographic moment in the locker room, after a season-ending loss for the local team.

things among U.S. daily newspapers: a place where photography is the marquee player and text a supporting cast. In 1988, Rumbach was the National Press Photographers Association picture editor of the year. In 1996, Torsten Kjellstrand, who now shoots for *The Spokesman-Review* in Spokane, Washington, was named photographer of the year by NPPA. In both cases, *The Herald* was among the smallest papers ever to win those awards.

That kind of success has drawn a stream of talented photojournalists through Jasper. As many as sixty applications roll in twice a year for the paper's six-month photo internship. "Nobody in the country is doing what they are doing with photojournalism," says Steve Mellon, who was at *The Herald* from 1984 to 1987, and now is a photographer for *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*.

The centerpiece of Rumbach's visual show is the Saturday Feature. Begun in 1978, these stories are a weekly marriage of photos and words that fills the first two to eight pages of the tabloid. No ads. Subjects range from the routine (first communion) to the profound (a year with a brother and sister who were paralyzed in a car wreck). The stories reflect what is happening in Jasper and surrounding Dubois County.

"It is one of the few places that puts out a paper built around real documentary work," says Kjellstrand. With only two photographers and an intern, the workload is brutal; Kjellstrand says he once shot some thirty photo stories in a year. And while the

finished product varies in quality, when it works the words and pictures have a simple power that even video cannot replicate.

It's hard to imagine a paper more suited to its community than *The Herald* is to Jasper, a German-American town full of tidy brick homes with wide, lush lawns that, if not kept well-trimmed, may draw a twenty-five dollar fine. Furniture factories put Jasper on the map, and the wood products industry is still the town's main employer. High school sports are major social events that produce near-nightly work for *Herald* photographers.

The Herald arrives in the afternoon — factory shifts start early — and still carries the service club meeting reports that Rumbach's father, J.T., who died in 1997, considered part of the paper's debt to the community. (His grandfather, A.T. Rumbach, ran the Ku Klux Klan out of town by publishing the names of local members.) The paper still shoots film — black-and-white film — at a time when digital cameras have made darkrooms quaint. *Herald* employees get a turkey at Thanksgiving. "I grew up with this feeling that the newspaper and the community are tied together," says Rumbach.

But until the mid-1970s, when Rumbach finished at Notre Dame and came to work at the paper, *The Herald* was mostly unremarkable. "A community bulletin board," he says. It didn't even have a full-time photographer. To hear Rumbach tell it,

'Photographers should be reporters'

some flack from the local Kiwanis club sparked the paper's visual revolution. The guy called the paper one day and wanted a photographer to cover the guest speaker at the club's next meeting. Rumbach told him that the paper didn't have a photographer, but that he would send a reporter over to write a story. "He said, 'You know, people won't read a story unless there's a picture with it,'" Rumbach recalls. "I thought about it and realized that the majority of the story ideas that came in from readers involved photos. The readers were telling me something."

On a shelf behind Rumbach's desk is a nameplate that reads "Clark Kent, Daily Planet." Rumbach is kind of a self-taught photojournalism superhero, saving the genre from the onslaught of boring crops and postage-stamp pictures. He went to workshops and asked questions, then went home and experimented. When Alan Petersime, now a photo editor at *The Indianapolis Star*, joined *The Herald* in 1979 as its first full-time photographer, Rumbach "already had the vision of what he wanted the paper to become."

That vision was to use photos to tell stories, not just to break up the words with pretty images. "Photographers should be reporters," Rumbach says. "They should do the research." It's no coincidence that many of the *Herald* photographers, including Pierini, began their careers as reporters. "I can't make a good picture unless I do the reporting," Pierini says. "I don't have a lot of tricks in my bag."

When Rumbach's new photo philosophy met his genetic commitment to community journalism, the result was visually driven stories that, as he says, "document the little things that make a community a community, and find interesting things to say about them." Mellon recalls being sent to cover a spelling bee, and told to come back with not just a photo page, but a story with a narrative. "A spelling bee!" he says. "That's unheard of."

This blend of priorities means that a *Herald* photographer is not always the one with the best eye or the flashiest style. "People think that *The Herald* is this great showcase for photographers, and to a degree it is," says Pierini. "But a lot of what we do here is take care of our community."

Most photographers who come to Jasper leave after a few years — albeit with heavy hearts — burned out by the workload or spurred on by the hunger for bigger markets. Pierini, though, is someone you could imagine growing old there. When he was a photojournalism student at Western Kentucky University, *The Herald* published *Friends & Neighbors*, a coffee-table collection of its photography; Pierini drove two and a half hours from Bowling Green to buy it, then waited in the newsroom for Kjellstrand and Tim Myers, another former *Herald* photographer, to arrive so they could autograph his copy. "To me this isn't a job, it's a gig," says Pierini, who is thirty-five and has worked at newspapers since he was a high-school kid covering hockey games for *The Suburban News*, a weekly shopper in Livonia, Michigan, outside Detroit where he grew up. "I still can't believe I work here."

He and Jasper move to the same rhythm. He loves the small talk with the farmers and the factory workers, the teasing with the school kids, the fried chicken at Heichelbech's Wednesday night buffet. "No history book compares to meeting one of these guys," Pierini says, standing in a cemetery just before Memorial Day with two old vets and the groundskeeper who are putting flags on graves. "Just listen. You can pick up so much." What he picks up this day is a story idea about an automated egg facility on a nearby farm that cranks out 250,000 eggs a day.

At their best, Pierini's pictures have an accessibility that is hard to describe; you know exactly how a person in one of his



Two of *The Herald's* Saturday Features

photos is feeling. "He takes pictures that make readers pause," says Rumbach.

Starting in the spring of 2000, Pierini and Martha Rasche, the *Herald's* city editor, who grew up on a farm just outside Jasper, spent a year with James Earls, a local man who weighed over 400 pounds and decided to have gastric bypass surgery to shrink his stomach. The result was essentially a Saturday story serialized over three days that took readers into Earls's struggle.

Rasche and Pierini took turns leading the other through the piece as they dropped in and out of Earls's world. Pierini became close to Earls. "I knew what that guy was going through, because I've been heavy all my life," he says. "It was hard to make some of those photos." Through this bond, though, he was able to let Rasche know when Earls was struggling, for instance, so she could go interview him. That collaboration, Rasche says, "really brought the words and pictures together." (To read the Earls story, go to www.dcherald.com/stories.html.)

Once the words and pictures were in, Rumbach began leaping tall buildings in a single bound. "Learning how pictures interact with each other, and how they affect the reader, is the hard part of photo editing," he says. "Getting the pictures so that they build on one another, leading the reader through the story." In the Earls piece, we see him shrink from beginning to end; the expression on his face tracking the change from pain to fear to joy. "Dave captured feelings and issues that are hard to get on film," Rumbach says.

And they do this every Saturday.

Several times a year, someone inquires about buying *The Herald*. "We just throw those in the wastebasket," says Rumbach. The paper manages to thrive despite being blissfully out of step with the modern newspaper industry in so many ways, and the cycle of teaching and learning and documenting that Rumbach began years ago continues, far removed from the hand-wringing over corporate ownership, shrinking newsholes, and bottom-line journalism. David Pierini will move on eventually, even though he was born to work at Rumbach's *Herald*. His girlfriend of thirteen years, now a contract writer with the *Chicago Tribune*, doesn't want to live in Jasper, and they have been apart so much of those thirteen years that, as Pierini says, the next decision will be "for the couple."

Andrew Otto, though, who was hired in May as the paper's second photographer, seems appropriately tuned to *The Herald's* wavelength. "People say nothing happens here," says twenty-eight-year-old Otto. "But what does that mean? Life happens here." ■

Brent Cunningham is CJR's managing editor.

DIGITAL DANGERS

The New Forces that Threaten Photojournalism

BY JOHN DORFMAN

It has never been easy to make a living as a photojournalist, but shifting market forces and corporate practices, both abetted by changes in technology, are making it even harder.

Who or what is to blame? Some photographers focus on Corbis and Getty, two corporate titans that are, in quite different ways, bringing about a seismic shift in the way the business of photojournalism is conducted. Still, as sometimes happens in photography, the picture is not tack-sharp.

First, consider Corbis. On January 28, 2002, the employees of the Sygma photography agency went on strike. Dressed in black, photographers and staff lay like corpses on the floor of their Paris offices to protest a new contract that Sygma's American parent company, Corbis, was trying to impose. At issue was the proposed conversion of all Sygma photographers to free-lance status, under which they would have to assume all the costs of producing their work instead of sharing them with the agency as before. Furthermore, free-lance photographers, under French law, would be ineligible for press cards and health benefits. A mood of outrage took hold, with Sygma photographers sending out a press release that claimed "the future of a whole profession — photojournalism — is being wagered." After sixteen days, Corbis announced the "redundancy" of all forty-two Sygma photographers based in Paris, along with the downsizing of the agency's support staff by almost half. Its smaller American contingent, based in New York, had already quit by then, disgusted with Corbis's management of the agency.

Although the contractual dispute was bitter enough in itself, the Sygma affair aroused particularly strong passions because Corbis is wholly owned by Bill Gates. His acquisition of Sygma and several other photo agencies represented, for



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DOWN AND OUT: A strike at Sygma.

many photographers, a brazen attempt to seize control of their work, to enrich Gates's giant online collection of images while exploiting those who create the images. Henri Cartier-Bresson, at age ninety-three the senior member of the French photojournalistic establishment, wrote that he was "scandalized by the casualness and the cruelty of the massive firing The compilation of an image bank, as well stocked as it might be, will never match the work of an author," he wrote. "On one side is a machine; on the other is a living and sensitive being. Corbis offers no choice."

Aside from the obvious elements of Franco-American culture clash, the Corbis-Sygma debacle crystallized an industry-wide sense that the business of photojournalism is changing rapidly and for the worse — at least as far as photographers are concerned. The Corbis press office, in a letter sent to a British photojournalists' Web site during the strike, explained the situation this way: "It is important to understand that the global market for news and editorial images has been changing in significant ways over the past few years with much less demand for daily spot news and 'hard news,' an increase in demand for life-style, celebrity, and feature stories of global interest, and a client preference for digital images. Corbis has

begun to shift its news and editorial business to meet these changing demands."

The story of Corbis begins with picture frames on the walls of Bill and Melinda Gates's house — digital picture frames or "interactive home systems," to be precise. With this ingenious contrivance, the Gateses could download pictures from the Web or CD-ROMs and view them hanging on the wall. If they got bored with a picture, another was available at the click of a remote. The initial idea was to license paintings from museums worldwide and digitize them.

Then Gates, being Gates, got to thinking bigger. Images, whether fine art, journalism, illustration, or what have you, would be the emerging dominant commodity of the Internet era. Via the Web, more and more images than ever before could be delivered instantaneously, and Gates could be the one to profit from this. So in 1989 he founded Corbis, initially to license images from museums. By 1995, under the guidance of CEO Steve Davis, Corbis had expanded its mandate by buying up the Bettmann Archive, one of the world's largest collections of documentary images. Of the thirteen or so million images to which Corbis owns the copyright, Bettmann alone accounts for eleven million. In addition, Corbis pos-

sesses licensing rights for countless more images — as many as 80 million. Along with Bettmann, Corbis also absorbed the photo archives of UPI, the now defunct news wire service.

In the late '90s Corbis decided to add more news and stock photography to its holdings. After acquiring stock and celebrity services like Stock Market and Outline, Corbis swallowed Sygma, SABA, Kipa, and Tempsport — news agencies, mostly based in Europe, that represented the old way of doing business in photojournalism: the agency got assignments for the photographers, arranged the logistics for their reporting trips, and advanced them money when necessary; in return, it got a cut of the royalties from the sale and resale of the pictures. The agency also helped the photographers protect their copyrights. (Magnum, founded in 1947, was actually a cooperative owned by photographers.) A crop of agencies, including Sygma, proliferated in the 1960s, and over the next two decades built a reputation for high quality and journalistic integrity. Unfortunately, they did not build a reputation for practicality or financial probity. Corbis, when it acquired Sygma, was initially looked upon as a white knight that would rescue the mismanaged agency from ruin.

So how did Corbis end up being loathed as “the ultimate threat to photographers,” in the words of the veteran news photographer and photojournalism pundit Dirck Halstead? In part, the relationship between Sygma and Corbis deteriorated because it was founded on a misunderstanding. Corbis executives mistakenly believed that by acquiring Sygma, Corbis would own Sygma’s archives, that it would immediately gain the copyrights to millions of images. They assumed that since most Sygma photographers were technically salaried employees, their pictures would become the property of the company. But under French copyright law, a photographer automatically owns the rights to his work for life, even if done as an employee.

Once Corbis realized that it hadn’t actually bought the images, only human capital, it lost interest in putting money into the agency. Corbis didn’t think it was worth investing in images whose copyrights it wouldn’t own. By reducing photographers to the status of independent contractors, Corbis would avoid having to pay their costs and would just make money on licensing. In other words, it

would be pure profit for Corbis. As Patrick Durand, a French Sygma photographer, complained to the Web site *The Digital Journalist*, “It’s a perfect plan for them: we work on our own, pay all the incumbent costs (our expenses, our film, etc.), try to make the first sales and bring Corbis the material, which they only have to sell.”

The misunderstandings went both ways. In one case, an attempt by Corbis to register copyrights on behalf of its photographers was misinterpreted by the photographers as a plot to grab their copyrights. In another incident, Dirck Halstead wrote a column in *The Digital Journalist* complaining that Corbis’s Web site was offering his photographs, taken when he was with UPI, with no byline, only “photograph by Corbis.” Pulitzer Prize-winning photos of the Vietnam War by Tim Page and Kyoichi Sawada were also without attribution. But instead of being a nefarious scheme to separate works from their creators, the lack of bylines was simply a product of human error, and not even Corbis’s error, at that. It turned out that UPI’s huge archives had been spotty, and many images came to Corbis without proper attribution.

Misunderstandings aside, the photojournalistic community continues to see Corbis as a plague. Part of this may be due to an inevitable clash of cultures. Peter Howe, a longtime photojournalist and photo editor who was vice-president for photography and creative services at Corbis from 1998 to 2000 (see page 23), explains that “the photojournalist culture is loose — ‘my word is my bond.’” Corbis, meanwhile, “comes from a paranoid software culture — paranoid for good reason, because software is the easiest thing to rip off that you could imagine Of course, photographers are a paranoid bunch too, also for good reasons.”

How did
Corbis end up
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Howe believes that emotional factors are not to be neglected, either. “Being a photojournalist is a kind of lowly existence,” he says. “You need physical and emotional support, long-distance hand-holding. Corbis has completely removed that element. With them, it’s just a financial arrangement.” Not that a financial arrangement wasn’t needed. “Photojournalism needed someone with business sense to give it a kick in the backside,” Howe says. “Photojournalists are totally incapable of balancing a checkbook, hopeless. So they needed Corbis and Getty, but Corbis and Getty are turning it into a factory business.”

Another cause of resentment has to do with archives. Corbis has been remiss in returning slides and negatives to photographers who have terminated their relationship with the agency and asked to get them back. One of them, Allan Tannenbaum, is suing Corbis to recover his pictures and to get an accounting of royalties owed. If he is successful, at least two other photographers say they will do the same. While Tannenbaum believes that Corbis’s delays are a tactic to grab photographers’ rights, other photographers are willing to chalk it up to the company’s legendary inefficiency.

The Corbis culture didn’t fit photojournalism’s in other ways as well. Corbis failed to appreciate the difference between stock and news photography, because its Internet bias led it to treat all images alike. Stock photographers can afford to front the money for their work because re-licensing guarantees them a high return on investment. News photographers generally can’t afford to front money, not only because the licensing potential is less but also because the cost of producing reportage, especially in foreign countries, is very high.

And in the end, Corbis really got little for its pains. Sygma isn’t much of a player in the news business anymore. “Sygma is more or less dead,” says Frederic Neema, a French photographer who quit Sygma a year and a half ago. “Magazines aren’t going to call them.” And with the firing of the Sygma photographers, Corbis has lost most of its major talent. It still represents the work of fifty photographers from SABA, another agency it took over, but SABA’s clout, too, has been compromised, by the resignation of its founder, Marcel Saba. Rick Boeth, Corbis’s director of photography for global news, says the company is trying to reestablish relationships with former Sygma photographers on a “free-lance model.” Boeth arrived at

Corbis three days before the mass firing. "I'm part of the rebuilding effort," he says. "We're trying to help photographers establish themselves as independent contractors." When asked how many he has signed up, he will only say, "a relatively small number."

Corbis is not by any means the only entity trying to reorganize photojournalism. The French publishing giant Hachette Filipacchi recently swallowed the Gamma photo agency, and Getty Images, co-founded in 1995 by the oil heir Mark Getty, has acquired Newsmakers, Liaison, Allsport, and Online USA — taking on a large contingency of photojournalists and essentially turning them into day laborers. Getty, a patron of the International Center of Photography and sponsor of the Infinity Awards for photojournalism, famously declared that "intellectual property is the oil of the twenty-first century."

Ironically, considering all the invective that has been heaped on Corbis, its archrival Getty is the one to watch. "Corbis was seen as the big evil conglomerate," says Peter Howe. "But Corbis has been mostly inept, while Getty is very apt at forcing conditions on photographers which are far more onerous." Corbis photographers' contract still guarantees a 40 percent to 50 percent split on royalties,

but the vast majority of news photographers at Getty operate on a work-for-hire basis, which means that they are paid a salary and Getty owns the entire copyright, with no royalties for the photographer. Some are stringers who get paid a day rate; they don't own their pictures either. A few photographers who came in with the agencies Getty took over still work on the old deal. One of them, Roger Le Moyne, says Getty does better sales and distribution than Liaison used to. "Corbis went first and made all the mistakes they could have made and showed Getty what not to do," he says. Michael Sargent, vice-president for news services at Getty, explains the situation this way: "We continue to work with legacy photographers on a 50/50 revenue split, but it's a shrinking group, to be honest with you. We're going more toward a work-for-hire arrangement."

What kind of photographer would sign up for such terms? Generally speaking, it is usually the younger ones who are willing to tolerate exploitation in return for a chance to take exciting pictures and establish their names. Sargent admits as much: "I'm looking for young and aspiring photographers who just want to take pictures. I give them a chance to flourish and develop. I give them the latest digital cameras and lap-

tops. I would challenge anyone to find a disgruntled photographer in this group." Asked to cite an example of a young photographer who has flowered under Getty's tutelage, Sargent names Tyler Hicks, who won the ICP Infinity Award this year for his reportage from the battlefields of Afghanistan. However, Hicks has quit Getty to be a full-time staff photographer for *The New York Times*.

Sargent was an editor at wire services for twenty-seven years, and indeed, Getty's model is the wire service. AP, Agence France Presse, and Reuters have photographers on staff, as well as stringers, none of whom own any rights. Older photographers tend to be aghast at the idea of giving up ownership. The New York-based, ex-Sigma photographer Rick Maiman says, "Young people coming into the business now are not aware that ownership is king. In the agency model, you retain ownership. If you wanted to die with your boots on, you went with an agency. In the wire service model, you're just a hired finger, fat and happy. But when you leave AP, you get your gold watch and a helping shove out the door." Sargent has little time for such sentiments. "Let's face it," he says, "This business has gone through enormous changes. The photographers who are truly concerned about it recognize this

PHOTOJOURNALISM ON THE WEB: THREE MODELS

The Internet makes it possible to publish images with lower overhead than ever before, and some sites have sprung up to take advantage. Whether this small renaissance can last and stay connected to its audience remains to be seen, and it is definitely an open question whether the economics of the Web will be feasible for the photographers themselves. But Dirk Halstead, the founder of one of the most prominent sites, is cheerfully optimistic: "The sites are mutually supportive. In traditional publication, exclusivity is the coin of the realm. In the online world, it's exactly the opposite: the aim is to get your brand known, so you cooperate with what otherwise would be called the competition. We're keeping alive a tradition we're immensely proud of, which can't be done anymore in the print format because the cost is a death spiral." Here are three major sites, operating on three economic models, to watch:

THE DIGITAL JOURNALIST (digitaljournalist.org) is the brainchild of Halstead, who covered the White House for UPI and *Time* magazine for more than thirty years. His site is not only a venue for photo stories but a virtual community center for photojournalists and enthusiasts alike, with articles on the state of the discipline, editorials and essays by Halstead and others, technical information about new digital camera technology, forums for photojournalists, and even a bookstore.

In June, The Digital Journalist moved to the University of Texas at Austin — where Halstead will be a professor at the journalism school

— and became a nonprofit arm of the university. "The key for online photojournalism is sponsorship and nonprofits," says Halstead.

In keeping with the freebie ethos of the Web, the consumer doesn't pay, and Halstead doesn't pay photographers for their contributions, either. But by allowing photographers to publish their work online without the usual constraints and compromises of print, he reasons, The Digital Journalist helps them get noticed and perhaps eventually have their work published in book form.



CAMERA WORKS (washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/photo/index.html) is hosted by the online arm of *The Washington Post*, and it does pay photographers. Editor Tom Kennedy, formerly the photo editor of *National Geographic*, says, "We pay our way as much as we can. Dirk might say his model is the museum; ours is more of a commercial model." The images he publishes come mainly from wire services and from *Post* staff photographers. "I don't have the budget I had four years ago," Kennedy laments. "Before the bubble burst, I was able to afford outside content, and I hope that eventually we'll be able to turn the corner on that."

Camera Works, which Kennedy named after Alfred Stieglitz's pio-

and adapt. There's an angry strain of photographers who can't step away from the legacy years and adapt to changing times. They're the ones we can't work with."

The business is changing, and it's unlikely that we will see a wholesale return to old ways. The new regime in photojournalism is intimately bound up with the Internet and the modes of interaction the Internet imposes. To buy pictures from Corbis or Getty, an editor now selects, downloads, and pays for an image, all online, and so do the wire services. At the old agencies, Dirck Halstead recalls, "people had worked there all their lives and knew intuitively what was in those boxes. That doesn't exist anymore. There are no individual picture requests; you have to do it all online." It is arguable that this system brings about a greater homogeneity of pictures and a lack of communication between editors and photographers, to the journalistic detriment of the product.

The Web does provide photographers with a way to market their own work directly via personal sites. With a sufficient initial outlay of money, a photographer could outfit himself with the requisite

technology and realize 100 percent return on royalties, as well as establishing his own "brand." The problem is that to mount a one-person online sales operation is just too time-consuming for most photographers. And besides, without the kind of access that an agency has, a Web site might not be able to make enough sales to justify the effort. There are some promising Web sites (see sidebar) that showcase sophisticated photojournalistic work and allow photographers a degree of freedom rarely available in traditional media. Although they generally either don't pay for pictures or pay very little, that could eventually change.

One major reason why the industry has been undergoing a sea change is that the nationwide newshole has been shrinking for quite some time, partly due to economic factors but also due to public apathy, or at least a perception of public apathy. After September 11, it suddenly seemed as if the public had rediscovered an appetite for hard news, especially foreign news. And equally suddenly, a traditional cooperative photographers' agency appeared on the scene. Called VII after the seven charter members — four of whom had left SABA — its mission statement says it was "formed in response to the dramatic changes taking place in the ownership, representation, and distribution

of photojournalism." September 11 put VII in the game in a way no one could have predicted. By pure chance, the new agency was announced just five days before the terrorist attacks, and its most famous member, the *Time* magazine war photographer James Nachtwey, lives a few blocks from the World Trade Center site. Nachtwey got back to New York from abroad on September 10 and was at Ground Zero almost immediately after the first plane hit, getting some of the best pictures of the day. And presumably getting top dollar for them.

Could VII represent a new movement of photographers retaking control of their own work in an atmosphere of renewed interest in photojournalism? Not every agency can count on recruiting star members who are already on contract to major publications, as the founders of VII are, and the mood of September 11, like all things, shall pass, if it hasn't already.

But this much seems true: people still want to see newsworthy, aesthetically satisfying pictures, and there are plenty of talented photographers out there who are willing to risk hardship and poverty to make them — and searching for ways to make a living at it. ■

John Dorfman is a writer and photographer who lives in New York.

neering turn-of-the-century photography magazine *Camera Work*, is the most news-heavy of the Internet photojournalism sites. With such features as "The Day in Photos" and "The Week in Review," Camera Works provides exciting and eloquent images from around the world, updated constantly. The thematic editing strategy combines images by different photographers into a narrative whole; there are also more traditional essays by single photographers.

PIXEL PRESS (pixelpress.org) was created by Fred Ritchin, a professor of photography and communications at NYU's Tisch School and a former photography editor at *The New York Times Magazine*. The site features a multimedia approach. Using animation technologies such as Flash Media, Pixel Press not only offers video journalism, it also publishes photo essays in which the pictures change on screen like a slide show, to the accompaniment of music or other sounds. Current offerings include an essay on the crisis in Argentina by Joseph Rodriguez, Sebastião Salgado on "The End of Polio," and a meditative sequence by Ritchin on "Looking Through Mirrors."

Like Kennedy, who also likes the multimedia approach, Ritchin has

ambitions in the direction of transforming photojournalism, not just recreating the picture story format of the glory days. Ritchin regrets he cannot update the site as often as he would like. And, unfortunately, he too cannot pay photographers for their work. Pixel Press's business model is unique. Rather than getting foundation money or being a branch of a for-profit news organization, Ritchin and his tiny staff seek out clients like museums and human rights organizations and help them achieve a visually sophisticated presence on the Web. They also package books and exhibits.

Ritchin is still very much in the tradition of the "concerned photographer" originated by Robert Capa and his ilk. The Salgado story on polio tied in to a fundraiser at the Aperture Foundation. "It's infinitely more important to cure polio than to see pictures," he says.

—J.D.

CAMERA-WORKS





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HEALTH POLICY AS IT HAPPENS

BOOKS

Journalists, Meet Your Maker

BY MICHAEL MASSING

From *Yahweh to Yahoo!* is the product of one journalist's spiritual quest. As a political reporter for *The Seattle Times* in the 1980s, Doug Underwood grew frustrated at how the practice of journalism was succumbing to the influence of marketers. Fed up, he left the news business and joined the communications department at the University of Washington. While there, he channeled his bitterness into a book, *When MBAs Rule the Newsroom* (which began as a cover story in *CJR*). He remained restless, however, and in 1994 he decided to enroll in a Quaker seminary in Indiana. During his year there, Underwood explored his own roots as a Quaker, and he was struck by the rich connections between his religious heritage and the profession he had once practiced. Understanding those connections helped reaffirm for him his belief that journalism is not simply a profession like law or accounting but a "calling."

By the end of the year, Underwood had felt transformed by his experience, and *From Yahweh to Yahoo!* is his effort to share what he learned. "My main purpose," he writes, "is to unearth the way that religious values, hidden though they may be, guide journalists in their thinking and their dai-

**FROM YAHWEH TO YAHOO!
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BY DOUG UNDERWOOD
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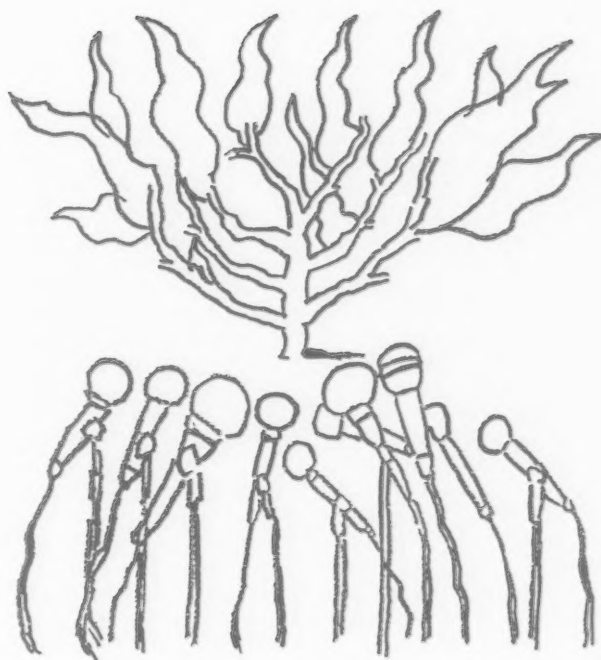
ly tasks and how those values have been shaped by the historical developments of Western religion." By doing this, he hopes to improve the way journalists go about their business. Reporters and editors, he believes, "are missing good and important

stories by not being better attuned to the religious dimensions of American culture." The public would be much better served, he writes, "if the coverage of religion were deeper, more perceptive, and more nuanced in its grasp of the spiritual impulse in people."

It's an audacious task. There seem few more irreverent places in the world than the modern newsroom. The skepticism, empiricism, and detachment so esteemed by journalists seem worlds away from the awe, mysticism, and credulousness demanded by faith. The Bible, meanwhile, seems of less relevance to journalists than Strunk & White. What does the story of the Exodus or the Acts of the Apostles have to do with the world of investigations, exposés, and scoops? A

great deal, Underwood maintains in this intriguing, idiosyncratic, and ultimately maddening book. In place of the usual procession of journalistic forerunners — the mocking Voltaire, the slashing Tom Paine — Underwood offers an alternative roster of "preachers and proselytizers" whose writings, and sense of mission, helped pave the way for modern-day journalism.

Among his heroes is George Fox, the founder of Quakerism, who, in a series of polemical tracts in the seventeenth century, advocated political reform and free expression. While it may be a stretch to regard Fox's writings as journalism, Underwood writes, they in fact represented a "raw and inspired" form of expression that Underwood calls



MARK RIDWAN

"prophetic journalism" — a journalism of "passion, polemic, and moral opinion" that hearkens back to the preachings of such biblical figures as Isaiah and Jeremiah and that continues to characterize modern-day advocacy and adversarial journalism.

Underwood also extols Samuel Johnson. Unlike Voltaire, who loathed conventional religion, Johnson blended a sense of Enlightenment practicality with an appreciation for religious tradition. In Underwood's view, Johnson showed that it was possible to remain open to the role that faith can play in human life while holding firm to such values as skepticism and rationality.

Ranking highest in Underwood's pantheon is William James. Though a committed pragmatist, James fully appreciated the role that faith plays in human affairs. His work *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, Underwood writes, provides journalists "with a clear road map for articulating the way religious insight can illuminate life experience in the practical realm of human existence." Journalists, he maintains, would perform their job "in a deeper, richer fashion" if, like James, they were "attuned to the way faith is lived out even in secular settings."

This is an appealing idea. By showing more respect for the varieties of religious experience around them, Underwood is arguing, journalists could bring a new level of insight and understanding to their coverage of the world at large. Since September 11, in particular, most journalists need little convincing of the importance of faith in the world. But how exactly to apply this lesson?

Underwood offers some interesting examples. One concerns Richard Nixon. By failing to understand the true nature of Richard Nixon's Quakerism, he contends, the press overlooked an important aspect of his political formation. In the end, Nixon's unscrupulous actions sprang from his own warped personality, but his attitudes were also shaped by the "splits, the schisms, and the struggle for a modern identity" among America's Quakers. Thus, Nixon's lifelong resentment of the eastern establishment in part reflected his roots in the evangelical southern California wing of Quakerism, which was far more conservative and anticommunist than the social-activist wing centered on the East Coast and on college campuses. The press's "blindness" to such nuances of religious life, Underwood writes, "deprived its audience of the fullest possible understanding of the religious wellsprings of

Nixon's inner nature and the way these translated into his political actions." And so it goes with American political leaders generally. Journalists, Underwood asserts, often have a "limited and superficial understanding of presidents' religious beliefs and the role that denominational differences play in their theological and political outlook."

Underwood sees similar superficiality in the press's coverage of the sightings of the Virgin Mary that have multiplied in recent years. Surveying seventy-five stories on the subject that appeared in major newspapers from April 1997 to May 2000, Underwood found that most were "one-sided, presenting only the religious claimants' point of view." Respectful "to the point of pandering," he writes, these stories were "bereft of context, analysis, or perspective about what might have led to such a widespread phenomenon." The reports omitted the views not only of skeptics but also of people of faith who might have had interesting things to say about why these sightings had increased and why so many people were flocking to them. "Most frustrating," Underwood writes, "nothing in any of the stories discussed why Mary is such a figure of reverence." The story of Marian visions, he explains, has "fascinating roots" that are bound up with Latin American politics, Vatican infighting, the growth of Catholic fundamentalism in Europe, and a heightened interest among Catholics in miracles and spiritual signs. That so many news outlets covered these sightings in so cursory a fashion, Underwood observes, "is a reflection of how jaded and routinized much media coverage of religion is."

As such passages show, *From Yahweh to Yahoo!* is a far cry from the many research studies that have appeared in recent years chastising the press for not paying enough attention to religion. Underwood does not want sugary features about devout do-gooders. Rather, he wants stories that show "faith in action" and that "add important context and perspective to what might otherwise seem to be no more than ordinary news accounts." Pulling this off, however, seems no easy task, and I wish Underwood had spent more time instructing us in it. Alas, *From Yahweh to Yahoo!* is very digressive and disorganized. It contains long, meandering discussions of such disparate topics as the press's worship of science, the "gospel" of public journalism, and Bill Gates's spiritual life.

Underwood also offers up a dreary, statistics-laden analysis of a survey he and a colleague conducted of journalists' religious and professional attitudes. Questionnaires went out to 1,413 daily newspaper journalists in the United States and Canada. Based on the 432 that came back, Underwood concludes that journalists "are more motivated by religious values than they may realize." Large majorities, for instance, reported that they attended church or were members of congregations. Even those who didn't express such overt religiosity responded positively "to calls to put traditional Judeo-Christian values into practice in their profession."

Yet Underwood defines such values so broadly as to render his findings virtually meaningless. Thus, he reports that many of his respondents reacted favorably to Paul's admonition to the Galatians that "you shall love your neighbor as yourself." This ethic has become so deeply engrained in Western culture, however, that no doubt large majorities of all professions endorse it. Underwood's findings seem even more questionable given that he got back responses from only 31 percent of his target population. It stands to reason that those who took the time to fill out the questionnaire and return it would be more religiously inclined than those who didn't. Yet Underwood makes no attempt to take this effect into account.

Underwood's drive to discern religious echoes in modern journalistic practice leads him to make some silly claims. For instance, he asserts that the romantic image of "the outsider hero" found in the story of Moses and of Joseph's rescue and rise to power retains "a deep hold on the journalistic imagination." As examples, he cites "Gunga Dan" Rather's "dropping in to cover the Afghan-Russian war" and CNN's Peter Arnett "staying on in Baghdad during the U.S. bombing in the gulf war." Dan Rather has been called many things over the course of his career, but no doubt this is the first time he's been compared to Moses or Joseph.

In general, Underwood finds religion in too many places. *From Yahweh to Yahoo!* — reflecting its own roots in a spiritual crisis — has a proselytizing tone that will put off many journalists. That's too bad, for its underlying message could be redeeming. ■

Michael Massing is a CJR contributing editor.

Remembering Tony Lukas

The discussion over just what "researcher assistants" do for authors, sparked by Doris Kearns Goodwin's plagiarism alibi and explored in Ana Marie Cox's piece in the last issue ("Whose Book Is It, Anyway?"), prompted CJR to ask a former researcher to reflect on her experience. Elaine Makovska worked for the late J. Anthony Lukas on his Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *Common Ground*. Here are some of her memories:

It was clear from day one that for Tony research was key. He was scrupulous about accuracy whether it was the spelling of a name, the correct birth date of someone's grandfather, or tracking down the origin of a rumor that had assumed the authority of veracity. No detail, no matter how small, was treated cavalierly.

Equally telling, Tony was always in complete control of the material. Once, after I sent him a cassette of a background interview I had done he told me he had typed it up. This surprised me since he could get the information the easy way by merely listening to the cassette. He said he liked to be able to read what was said; it was less likely he'd miss something.

After moving back to New York he made periodic visits to Boston and one November when he was in town he spent the entire Thanksgiving holiday typing up his notes in the emptiness of his club, St. Botolph's. Tony's material came first, holiday or not.

When Tony first started work on *Common Ground* he lived in Boston for several years. After the initial phase of selecting the families and the many long interviews with them, he returned to New York. But Tony was relentless in his quest, and there were always facts still to be checked, stones to be unturned, more information to be uncovered. All of it would add to the extraordinary accumulation of detail that would attempt to explain what happened, and why, after Judge Arthur Garrity issued his famous 1974 decision that led to the desegregation of the Boston public schools by busing. So for several years I worked as a long-dis-

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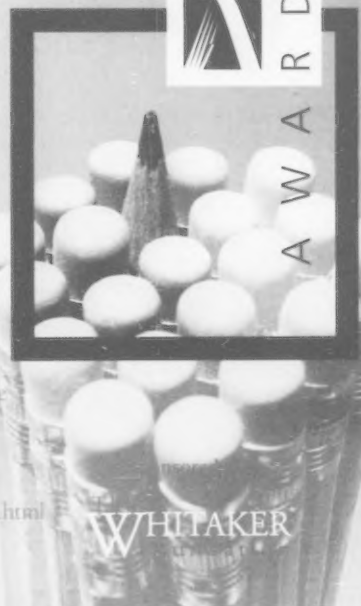
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tance free-lancer for Tony, spending hours, if not days, at the Boston Public Library poring over microfilm of old copies of *The Boston Globe* and the *Herald*, visiting various archives in search of an accurate date or name, and best of all, doing occasional interviews. Whatever the task, I was learning a great deal about Boston — not the Boston of Paul Revere and the Tea Party, but the Boston of vested interests. Working for Tony was like taking a graduate seminar in contemporary Boston power plays. I loved every minute of it.

His instructions to me, either by phone or letter, were always precise, not

only in outlining what needed to be done but in providing context as well. Although he gave me latitude to venture beyond the scope of his directions, and was generous with praise and appreciation, there was never a need to consult a job description. He was the writer, I the researcher. I saw what I did as contributing to the *preparation* of the book. The book itself was completely in Tony's hands.

Some years before, in the late sixties, I had lived on New York's Lower East Side when it was beginning its metamorphosis into the East Village. In October of 1967 there had been a pair of brutal

murders on Avenue B and I remember reading the *Times's* account. It was on page one below the fold and after reading only two paragraphs I looked back at the byline. It was the first time I had ever consciously done that; the first time the reporting made me want to know who the reporter was. It wasn't simply that the writing was good; writing in the *Times* was usually good. This was exceptionally fine writing backed by intelligence and perception. J. Anthony Lukas. From that day forward every time I saw his byline I read the article. It was a guaranteed investment.

Tony's trajectory — writing for *The New York Times*, then longer pieces for the *Times Magazine*, then full-length books — happened, I believe, not only because he was committed to showing the full complexity of stories, but also because he liked the hunt. I had the sense that he liked the grit of reporting because of the constant element of discovery. He told me that his early days covering night court for the *Baltimore Sun* had opened his eyes to many things. The element of discovery is something no researcher can provide in quite the same way. There's a *eureka* moment in every story, and if you're good — and Tony was — there are a lot of them.

Tony used researchers — there were nine of us on *Common Ground* at different times and for varying lengths of time — but it was inconceivable that he would abdicate responsibility for what he referred to as his "prickly pride of authorship." I don't think any of us — no matter how interested or involved with the subject matter — could have matched the intensity of engagement that Tony had with his book-in-progress. The search itself invigorated him.

I remember how animated he was when he told me of his discovery that Louise Day Hicks had been part of an integrated study circle at Boston University; or of the depth of antagonism that Cardinal Medeiros endured when he became head of the Boston Archdiocese. These weren't simply anecdotes he was conveying, parts of the story he was writing; this was life itself he was gathering together. Tony's absorption in his material was compelling to witness. ■

Elaine Makovska, a former documentary maker, newspaper editor, and teacher, is a free-lance writer in Maryland.



Announces THE KAISER MEDIA INTERNSHIPS IN URBAN HEALTH REPORTING FOR 2002

An internship program for young minority journalists interested in specializing in urban public health reporting

The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation is again sponsoring summer internships, starting June 2002, at ten metropolitan newspapers and at three local television stations, for young minority journalists interested in reporting on urban public health issues. The interns are selected by the newspapers/TV stations.

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Michael Hughes - *WAGA-5, Atlanta*
Mahvish Khan - *The San Jose Mercury News*
Huyi Jin Elizabeth Kim - *The Detroit Free Press*
Thomas Kim - *The San Antonio Express-News*
Nerissa Pacio - *The Los Angeles Times*
Sarah Park - *The Washington Post*
Michaela Saunders - *The Plain Dealer, Cleveland*
Quynh-Giang Tran - *The Boston Globe*

The Kaiser Internship Program provides an initial week-long briefing on urban public health issues and health reporting at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. Interns are then based for ten weeks at their newspaper/TV station, typically under the direction of the Health or Metro Editor/News Director, where they report on health issues. The program ends with a 3-day meeting and site visits in Boston. Interns receive a 12-week stipend and travel expenses. The aim is to provide young journalists or journalism college graduates with an in-depth introduction to and practical experience on the specialist health beat. For more details, check our website at www.kff.org; to apply for the 2003 program, e-mail or write to:

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In Praise of Passion

BY JOHN PALATTELLA

Once the bombs stop falling and the political dust has settled, how might one go about evaluating American coverage of the war in Afghanistan? That is, putting aside the question of the U.S. government's censorship of the press, a complicated subject in its own right, by what criteria might one begin to judge the press's performance? And, just as important, to whom might one turn for guidance?

If you pick up Fred Inglis's new book *People's Witness: The Journalist in Modern Politics*, you will find an argument that defiantly runs counter to conventional wisdom. Inglis, a professor of cultural studies at the University of Sheffield who writes frequently about journalism and politics, can't be bothered with wringing his hands, frowning his brow, or striking any other histrionic pose over the question of journalistic objectivity. For Inglis, the best journalists are those who have managed to create a climate of moral feeling about political events — wars mostly (World Wars I and II and Vietnam), but also social upheavals (the cold war, the 1968 Democratic convention, Watergate, the collapse of the Iron Curtain). Inglis doesn't presume that his prize scribes have written flawless first drafts of history, or even supplied readers with a complete transcript of events. Rather, they have produced journalism that does "exactly what journalism should, is truthful, faithful to the facts, bearing witness of human actuality to those who could not actually be there, and then matching the story with adequate feelings and moral judgment."

Inglis's book is a riposte of sorts to Phillip Knightley's seminal 1975 study *The First Casualty — From the Crimea to Vietnam: The War Correspondent as Hero, Propagandist, and Myth Maker*. Having pored over thousands of clippings and interviewed dozens of war correspondents, Knightley concluded that news about wars is almost always inaccurate. Truth gets compromised in many ways, he observed: by one writer's pangs of conscience (how can I profit from reporting on someone's misery?), another's mercenary swashbuckling (how can you not profit from it — war is

good for you), or an editor's indifference (atrocities are old news — how about a piece on the general's medals?). Yet Inglis thinks Knightley treats the notion of objectivity in a ham-handed, inflexible manner. Early on in his book, Inglis berates Knightley for being a "crazy priest of journalism" — Exhibit A being Knightley's criticism of Martha Gellhorn for reporting only the Allies' side of the story during World War II. Indeed, if Knightley's *The First Casualty* is a kind of *Pilgrim's Progress*, a story of how war correspondents seeking the celestial city of Truth have routinely sunk into the Slough of Despond, been tempted by Vanity Fair, and been traduced by editors from the Doubting Castle, then Inglis's *People's Witness* is a *Lives of the Saints*, a series of parable-biographies about journalists who despite their human foibles have managed to cover politics with a passionate, if not pentecostal,

PEOPLE'S WITNESS: THE JOURNALIST IN MODERN POLITICS

BY FRED INGLIS
YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS
406 PP. \$29.95

intensity. Their mission is to observe and preach, their religion is humanism, their gospel most often the Constitution of the United States.

In principle, Inglis's parables are intriguing; in practice, they are much less so. The book contains no original research but instead reconstellates a gallery of famous faces: Gellhorn, Halberstam, William Shirer, Edward R. Murrow, Walter Lippman, Neil Sheehan, Norman Mailer, Dorothy Thompson, Joan Didion, and I.F. Stone, among others. It's worth noting that *People's Witness* is being published simultaneously in Britain and the United States, which might explain why the book seems to have been written for a British audience, one which Inglis surmises is unschooled in the stock-in-trade of American journalism. "The contribution of what I call here the constitutionalists of American newspapers" — that is, writers who turn the constitution of the state against the state itself — "to making the world a better place is solid and unmistakable," Inglis states. "There is no such redress available in Britain, or indeed in most states of the European Union." Indeed, the book rarely

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strays beyond a cast of well-known American journalists, and its few Fleet Street episodes have a decidedly American hue, such as Harry Evans's stint as editor of the London *Times* during the 1970s. Under Evans's watch, Inglis contends, the *Times* went from being the genteel mouthpiece of Britain's political and monied classes to a paper that rattled those classes by doing American-style investigative journalism.

Most of Inglis's saints have two salient characteristics. First, they are moralists who write about politics while steering clear of political dogma. Though for the most part politically left of center, they refuse to abide by the heavy jargon of correct political thinking.

Second, Inglis's saints are artists who report. Literature is news that stays news, the poet Ezra Pound famously said. For Inglis, good journalism is news that becomes literature. This is by far the most provocative and engaging premise of *People's Witness*. "We live our lives by entering the stories open to us," he declares, and so he places a premium on a journalist's ability to tell a compelling factual story by respecting the essential principles of fiction, "the disciplined observation, [the] discussion and classification of human oddity."

For the newspaper business in America and Britain Inglis has little regard; in his eyes, its low opinion of readers and even lower prostration before advertisers permits only the coarsest kinds of storytelling. Hence, Inglis's high opinion of journalists like Gellhorn, Mailer, Didion, Sheehan, Orwell, Halberstam, Herr, and Hersey—writers who not only forged a distinct style but also managed to liberate their dispatches from the chancy map of the front page or the interim home of the glossy and then develop them into nonfiction books or novels, thereby enhancing both the art and shelf-life of their stories.

If only Inglis were an equally compelling storyteller. He rarely strikes the right balance between examining a journalist's writing and evoking the atmosphere in which that journalist worked. At times a journalist's tale seems to be little more than an opportunity for Inglis to rehash the history of various debates on the U.S. and European left during the twentieth century. At other times, a profile is little more than a close-up shot in soft focus.

On those occasions when Inglis does strike a good balance between journalist and atmosphere, the atmosphere could stand to be richer. In the book's best

chapter, "Adventurers and Constitution-alists: Vietnam and Watergate," Inglis writes eloquently about the approaches of Herr, Sheehan, and Gloria Emerson to political issues, but he avoids discussing an equally compelling and relevant question: how newsroom politics shaped coverage of Vietnam. Such a discussion would demand putting aside questions of writerly passion and craft and focusing on institutional ideology. Had Inglis managed to accomplish that, the work of the writers he so admires would seem even more remarkable, if only for having been published.

If the style makes the man or woman, as Inglis is fond of suggesting, what are we to make of Inglis based on his own style? Generally, his prose is an eclectic blend of the archaic (nouns like "viziers" and "charivari") and the waggish, the idiom of a professor eager to demonstrate that he is not pompous. The waggish Inglis is quick with a quip and adept at sketching a person's character in a few sharp strokes. In his eyes, Dorothy Thompson, the columnist for the *New York Herald Tribune*, "was a great tank of overwhelming, often overwhelmed feeling, firing off her passionate certainties like a cloud of incandescent gasoline." By 1968, Norman Mailer "had done everything a dust jacket could require." As for Tom Wolfe, he combines a deadly knowingness with "a coarse preference for injuring those who won't answer back, while hiding behind those who will. His is the politics, one might say, of the jeerer from a safe distance . . ." For a reader who dislikes Wolfe's work, this may be sufficient. But for someone who is unfamiliar with the work or who happens to like it, Inglis's sketch might seem to be nothing more than an ad hominem attack. The sketch is the centerpiece of a mere 300-word treatment of Wolfe; one might even call it a jeer from a safe distance.

Despite this and other flaws, Inglis's *People's Witness* is worth reading. He may not be as artful as the journalists he discusses, but his enthusiasm for them can be infectious, and the importance of his central question is certain: How effectively can journalists cultivate a moral point of view about a political situation by drawing on the resources of fiction but without compromising the truthfulness of what they report? ■

John Palattella has written for The Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, and Newsday.

Getting Between Covers

BY STEVE WEINBERG

Lots of journalists want to write books. Some of those journalists think the process is relatively simple. Take an already-published newspaper article, magazine feature, or television segment, then make it longer.

Susan Rabiner, a longtime book editor recently turned literary agent, is here to tell those journalists it is almost never that simple. Assisted by her husband, the freelance editor-writer Alfred Fortunato, Rabiner corrects misconceptions galore on the way to publishing one of the most useful books ever for would-be authors — and experienced authors, too. “A serious nonfiction book is not a piece of journalism writ large,” they observe. “It is a different animal with different markings and a different role to play.”

The Rabiner-Fortunato advice is a fine supplement to Betsy Lerner’s *The Forest for the Trees: An Editor’s Advice to Writers* (Riverhead Books, 287 pages, \$21.95; see CJR review, July/August 2000). Like Lerner,

Rabiner worked for many years as an editor in major publishing houses. Like Lerner, she decided to try agenting. Unlike Lerner, she decided to devote her book entirely to nonfiction, with lots of specific writing advice.

Some readers will probably be surprised to learn that writing style often plays only a tiny role in determining whether a proposal becomes a nonfiction book. Instead, the freshness of the idea

THINKING LIKE YOUR EDITOR

BY SUSAN RABINER AND
ALFRED FORTUNATO
NORTON. 284 PP. \$26.95

and the size of the potential audience drive the process — the first three rules of book publishing, as stated by Rabiner and Fortunato, are “audience, audience, audience.” The authors explain, for example, why a book proposal about women who become murderers is unlikely to receive an offer from a publisher such as Random House, while a proposal about children who become murderers is much more

likely to receive an offer. Who would buy a book about women murderers? Those likely to become such criminals? Maybe, but that is a small market. For other women and for men, the topic is too unthinkable to market. On the other hand, women and men who are parents might buy a book that explains how their children could go wrong. The Rabiner-Fortunato book is filled with illuminating examples of that kind.

Part one of their book, about submissions, suggests how to structure a book proposal and whether that proposal needs an agent. Part two, about the writing process, discusses the extensive research that undergirds all successful narrative. Part three focuses on how authors and editors can work as an effective team, starting with an author’s understanding that every editor has lots of other authors to deal with, too. A sample proposal accompanied by a sample chapter round out the book.

Novelists and short-story writers should start with Lerner, but nonfiction authors might start with Rabiner-Fortunato. Taken together, the books constitute an excellent short course in how editors operate. ■

Steve Weinberg is a CJR contributing editor.

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BOOK REPORTS

BY JAMES BOYLAN

MUCKRAKING! THE JOURNALISM THAT CHANGED AMERICA

Edited by Judith and William Serrin
The New Press. 392 pp. \$25 paper

Judith and William Serrin, both of them journalists and teachers of journalism, have performed a major service in this anthology, retrieving journalism long condemned to the obscurity of library shelves, microfilm, and videotape. But the book is not built around muckraking as such, even in the broadest sense of that widely stretched term; indeed, the one-word title seems to be a come-on. It includes samples of muckraking, the classic literature of exposure of a hundred years ago, as well as generic muckraking — investigative reporting. But there is much more. The subtitle — “The Journalism That Changed America” — says it better. And the introduction, which contains no reference to muckraking at all, puts it best, “This is a book about doing journalism and doing good.” These two phrases, as the Serrins note, are not always linked these days. This collection offers ample evidence that journalism can do good — that journalists have aided the afflicted, exposed what Theodore Roosevelt called malefactors, and pushed America toward becoming a more democratic, more compassion-

ate society. Big goals, and not of course ever truly attained, but the direction is what counts. The Serrins did a great deal more than paste up. Each exhibit is prefaced with historical scene-setting, and followed with an account of historical consequences, a burdensome labor, considering the wide variety of situations and results. But even more important was their assiduous searching beforehand, to find and offer items that might have escaped even historians of journalism. Some of the plums: Excerpts from John Steinbeck's series in the *San Francisco News* about the squalor of the migrants' camps in California, three years before he transmuted his reporting into *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Homer Bigart's uncollected 1963 classic from *The New York Times* on poverty in Appalachia. “Old Age at Forty,” on working conditions in steel mills, by John A. Fitch, a researcher/writer from the pioneering Pittsburgh Survey, a pre-World War I sociological study. The horrors of work-related silicosis, exposed in 1935 by Bernard Allen in *New Masses*. The daring exposé by Matt Witt of failures of mine safety enforcement in the *United Mine Workers Journal* (1974). The bold exposition by Roy Norr in *Reader's Digest* (1952) of scientific findings on cigarette smoking. The inquiry into Ford/Firestone tire failures initiated by the investigative unit at KHOU, Houston.

The Miami Herald's revelation of vote fraud, not in 2000 but in 1997. The condemnation as a boondoggle, in the *New York World-Telegram and Sun*, by Gene Gleason and Fred J. Cook of a slum-clearance program under New York's construction czar, Robert Moses (1956). The leadership of the New York's Communist *Daily Worker* in pointing the way toward the integration of baseball. The article in an architects' journal in 1921 that proposed the creation of the Appalachian Trail. The effort by the *Jewish Frontier* monthly in 1942 to call attention to the Holocaust. The dramatic exposure by the great but neglected muckraker Charles Edward Russell of Georgia's convict-leasing system.

The volume contains a great deal more, including many items more celebrated or familiar than the ones cited above. The anthology is not tightly organized and is in fact something of a grab-bag — not really a drawback, because one can usually dip into it and find something stimulating.

An interesting point, made here by implication, is that unlike other recent collections *Muckraking!* shows a buoyant confidence in activist journalism rather than hinting that it died thirty, or forty, or fifty years ago. Much journalism is, and always has been, routine; it is encouraging to read the exceptions. •

LOOKING BACK

By Russell Baker
New York Review Books.
185 pp. \$19.95

Russell Baker began writing essays for *The New York Review of Books* because, he says, he had spent thirty-seven years writing a column in *The New York Times* that was always exactly two and a quarter inches wide and eighteen inches long. “Years of writing constantly in this miniature form,” he admits, “eventually conditioned my mind to think only 750-word thoughts.” In 1997, an editor of *The New York Review* began to send him books, and these are essays he wrote about those that appealed to him. Several of the eleven touch on journalism; those on Joseph Mitchell of *The New Yorker* and

Murray Kempton disclose in him, he says, “a shameless bias toward elitism in journalism.” There are reflections as well on William Randolph Hearst, and for a change of pace, Joe DiMaggio, Nixon on Elba, and Eugene Debs, among others. Good reading for the millions who may not have seen the originals in *The New York Review*. •

JOSÉ MARTÍ: SELECTED WRITINGS

Edited and translated by Esther Allen
Penguin Books. 462 pp. \$15 paper

José Martí, Cuban revolutionary and poet, died at the age of forty-two in the 1895 uprising against Spain. He was also an independent journalist, and this collection contains a generous selection of his reporting from the United

States in the 1880s, evidently the first time these stories have appeared in English since *The America of José Martí*, a 1953 translation by Juan de Onís. At first glance the stories appear to be done in ornate nineteenth-century style, but it is soon apparent that in frankness and detail they come closer to the New Journalism of a much later era. In particular, Martí made high drama of the trial of Charles J. Guiteau, President Garfield's assassin, and the prizefight between John L. Sullivan and a boxer known as the Giant of Troy (New York). The Giant lost. •

James Boylan is the founding editor of *CJR* and professor emeritus of journalism and history at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.



HEARST: WHERE JOURNALISM OF DISTINCTION IS AN EVERYDAY STORY

How a newspaper series helped relieve stress in its community.



In the days since September 11, stress levels have gone up for most of us. And while it is a common topic of conversation, not many people really understand how to cope with or manage stress in their daily lives.

The Albany Times Union took a close look at stress—its causes, its consequences, and what to do about both. A comprehensive week-long series offered readers expert advice on overcoming the negative effects of stress. "Overdrive: Navigating Stress" tackled stress from the inside out. Articles provided useful information that men, women and children could use to cut stress, including tips on smarter eating habits and exercise plans. The series also covered the ways stress affects relationships and how to get help.

Readers responded positively. Now "Overdrive: Navigating Stress" has become a website hotspot <http://www.timesunion.com/life/stress>. The Albany Times Union dedicated significant resources for this series so that people in the community could develop healthier lifestyles. It's one more way the Hearst Newspapers enrich readers' lives every day.



VOICES

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Saint Rudy

Since September 11 the press can't see beyond Giuliani's halo

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Bleak Numbers

Young people like to read, so why won't they read newspapers?

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Boardroom Heresy

The logic of filling newspaper boards with people who know newspapers

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Essay: Naming the Problem

A lost woman is found, but not saved



VOICES, funded in part by the Ford Foundation, offers independent viewpoints on a variety of subjects. CJR welcomes contributions. You may submit manuscripts to the locations listed on page 4.

REPORTING

Chameleon Man Meets Ticking Time Bomb



BY CHRISTOPHER HANSON

Christopher Hanson, a newspaper reporter for twenty years, teaches journalism at the University of Maryland. He is a CJR contributing editor.

The police arrest a suspect in a shocking crime. He turns out to be middle class, with a legitimate job and without a criminal record. He's a source of instant fascination, so reporters rush to pump his friends and associates for revealing anecdotes.

The results are usually eerie and engrossing, as readers expect, but they often reveal more about the way news is manufactured than about the alleged perpetrators themselves.

Reporters instantly label many of these suspects Human Chameleons. Their neighbors, friends, and co-workers are inevitably "baffled," "surprised" or "stunned," and say they have seen nothing at all to suggest a violent side. *The New York Times*, for instance, recently reported that a man sought in a criminal rampage had shown "no signs of anger" and was regarded as "bright . . . with varied interests [and] always did well in school. People said they were stunned." (May 8, 2002). The subject was Luke Helder, the college student charged with planting eighteen bombs in rural mailboxes, terrorizing folks from Waukegan to Waco. An art major, Helder reportedly chose the locations of his blasts so they would create a giant "smiley face" on a map of the United States.

In the second, contrasting formula, the subject does display warning signs. *The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, for example, informed readers that one particular suspect had exhibited mounting anger and distress — a growing "dark side" — in the months before his heinous acts. He began raging against the government after a minor drug arrest and "became obsessed with death." The antithesis of the Chameleon, he was a Human Time Bomb, and an audibly ticking one at that.

By the way, he's the same Luke Helder *The New York Times* had cast as an apparently normal guy just twenty-four hours before.

Nonjournalists consider it perplexing when one version of news reality collides so jarringly with another. But anyone who has covered a story on deadline knows such consistency is not the first thing on one's mind.

Chameleon Man is most likely to make his appearance on Day One of the suspect's apprehension, when there is little time to probe. Neighbors conditioned by years of news cliché recite the ritual incantations on cue: "He was polite and kept to himself," "he helped me carry in the groceries. I guess he just snapped." Neighbors initially described the mass murderer John Wayne Gacy as a jovial guy who appeared as a clown at children's birthday parties. The reporters can reinforce the theme of surprise with descriptions of the suspect's apparently peaceful environs — "tree-shaded streets with well-manicured lawns," etc.

But afterward, reporters often find clues that the alleged perpetrator might have been displaying danger signs after all. Not to worry. They need only shop for new quotations: "He looked lost . . ." add fresh supporting material, and — zap! — yesterday's Chameleon is today's Ticking Bomb: YOUNG SUSPECT GREW TO DEFEY CONFORMITY (*Denver Post*, May 8) . . . ACQUAINTANCES SAY THEY NOTICED A TURN FOR THE WORSE IN HELDER (*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, May 9) . . . FRIENDS: MAILBOX BOMB SUSPECT CHANGED (AP, May 10).

Once this second theme is established, previously ambiguous data instantly snap into focus as overlooked danger signs. *The Washington Post*, for example, recently noted that a man charged with leaving his daughter to die in a baking van had "a lawn with bald spots" and "peeling paint around the front door." Helder's flagging spring attendance record became a telltale sign. If someone starts blowing off classes, before you know it he could be blowing off limbs.

The Washington Post opted for an audacious hybrid of the two standard takes. Its profile begins as classic Chameleon (BOMBING SUSPECT'S FRIENDS ARE BAFLED, May 9). We quickly learn Helder was quiet and reserved ("He kept to himself") but "nice." "Nothing in their experience suggested that he was violent." Then, suddenly, Helder is a Ticking Time Bomb, obsessed with the grunge rocker Kurt Cobain, who blew his head off with a shotgun. A friend was convinced Helder

would go out the same way and saw death as merely "the way to the next step." Tick-Tock.

As if testing how many contradictions can be packed into one article, the *Post* informs us that Helder "sought out people for impromptu jam sessions, asked friends to go with him to concerts, and played his electric guitar as loudly and as often as he could." In other words, Helder was quiet but loud, reclusive but gregarious. He gave no indication of incipient violence but the signs were as big as billboards.

This was no "on the one hand, on the other hand" piece: it was emphatic in opposite directions at once. And it was not an isolated case.

The *Post* recently ran a feature about two brothers, twelve and thirteen, who faced trial for beating their father to death with a baseball bat. Headlined A FATHER'S MURDER BAFLES FLA. TOWN, it declares: "The strangeness of this case baffles even those close to the boys and their father. Why would children of above-average intelligence, neither suffering from obvious deprivation, resort to such violence?" (May 4, 2000).

But in paragraph fourteen, we abruptly discover that the father put his boys in foster homes and that their nightclub singer mother abandoned them. In addition, a male friend of the father has been accused of raping the boys. Tick-tocks? These are more like booms from Big Ben.

This sort of self-contradictory, pushmepullyou reporting has its appeal. Journalists can terrify readers with the notion that violence lurks unseen in the "safest" places, and then immediately reassure them that crypto-manics can in fact be detected with vigilance.

More accurate and logical profiling requires restraint: leave the usual labels and formulas in template until you have enough facts to thoroughly fill in the blanks.

Some news outlets did take this cautious approach to Helder (e.g., PIPE-BOMB SUSPECT IS PUZZLE, *USA Today*, May 9, 2002), and they managed to combine accuracy with intrigue. After all, everyone loves a mystery in serial form — especially one that eventually gets solved. ■

Soros Justice Media Fellowship

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Rudy Giuliani, September 11, and The Making of a Media Myth



BY JOHN GIUFFO

John Giuffo is an assistant editor at CJR. He wrote a master's project for Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism titled "Rudy Giuliani's Love-Hate Relationship with the Law."

Quick, name the modern mythological figure: a talented young man of modest origins leaves home on a quest. But what begins as a genuine desire to help the powerless soon morphs into something darker, as the man, through a combination of ambition and loss, learns to stifle his empathy in

his search for order. Destined to go down in history as a distrusted imperial force, he saves himself and his reputation by doing The Right Thing at a moment of climactic violence.

No, it's not Darth Vader. I'm actually describing Rudy Giuliani, not that you'd know it from the coverage he's gotten lately. To those of us who have written about him and experienced his volatile paternalism firsthand, the current orgy of adoration — fueled largely by the myth-making abilities of the news media — is somewhat disturbing.

Giuliani's legend has taken on a life of its own. He has become "America's mayor," and *Time* declared him the most important newsmaker of 2001. As in all love affairs, we tend to see only the good, and gloss over flaws as if they don't exist. Rudy's accomplishments have been widely acknowledged. Suffice it to say that he's credited for the city's falling crime rate, cleaning up Times Square, bringing business to the city, and generally restoring the sense that New York, long thought ungovernable, is manageable under the right manager. And after September 11, of course, he said and did everything right.

But what's left out speaks volumes. On September 10, Rudy Giuliani was a lame-duck mayor whose history of histrionics and familial soap-operatics ensured that any fu-

ture political efforts would be scrutinized by a skeptical press. On September 12, he was a hero. And the press, ever ready to embrace the accepted script (Bush the dullard, Gore the dullest) has ensured that Giuliani will be remembered not for his seven and a half years of controversy and combat, but for his three months of Churchillian leadership.

Distance seemed to hinder journalistic ability to see the whole Rudy. *USA Today*, in its December 28 mayoral term wrap-up, called him a "rock star" (as did *The Houston Chronicle*) and, while acknowledging to some of his periodic controversies, focused mostly on his "glow." It did not mention his abysmal failure to address such problems as the chronic shortage of affordable housing or the huge budget hole he left his successor, which economists agree would have been gaping even without September 11. *The Boston Globe*, in its end-of-Rudy's-term piece on December 27, said "Giuliani's legacy will be one of compassion when it was needed most," largely forgetting that, for 15/16ths of his mayoralty, he was known for everything but his compassion. The only negative aspects the *Globe* addressed were the more sensationalistic milestones, such as his crusade against "indecent art" or his nasty public feud with his soon-to-be ex-wife, Donna Hanover.

It's not just the news pages that were stuck together with the effusion of Rudy love. A farewell editorial in the December 29 *St. Petersburg Times* devoted one sentence to acknowledging Giuliani's efforts to silence dissent and "impose his aesthetic tastes on the city," without hinting at any of his other shortcomings. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, in a December 28 editorial, "A Great Leader's

Farewell," dedicated just two sentences to Rudy's darker side. And the *Tampa Tribune* on January 2 said he did a "remarkable job as mayor," called him heroic, and said New York's minority communities "unquestionably benefited" from his policing policies. The *Tribune* did not address the crux of his difficulties with those communities, nor did it cite as one of the possible clues to those difficulties, State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer's report that illegal racial profiling was widespread under Giuliani's stewardship.

Not everyone got it wrong. *The New York Times* published on December 31 a long and detailed analysis of Giuliani's eight years, and spent a good deal of time addressing the fact that he left the public schools worse than he found them and excluded almost all of the city's blacks and most of its Hispanics from municipal decision-making. Jack Newfield, in the pages of *Newsday* and *The Nation*, also mapped the under-explored areas of Giuliani's reign.

But what about Giuliani's penchant for secrecy (his tight-fisted control of public information was infamous, and often ruled illegal), his role in the city's skyrocketing homelessness (higher now than when he took office), and the influence peddling and cronyism (Jimmy Breslin's latest book, *The Short Sweet Dream of Eduardo Gutierrez*, gets to some of this) that marked his administration? The devil, they say, is in the details, and the details of Giuliani's time as mayor have been largely left out of the most recent first draft of history. Let's hope that the moonstruck press does its job and tells the full story when Giuliani's rising star carries him toward higher office. ■

Young People Are Reading — Everything But Newspapers



BY ANDREW KOHUT

Andrew Kohut, director of the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, writes regularly for *CJR* about public attitudes toward the media.

The Pew Research Center's latest news media habits survey has some familiar results about newspaper reading. Once again, fewer people are reading newspapers, and the declines in readership are greatest among young adults and the

younger segment of the baby boom generation. But the same survey shows that young people are reading books and magazines at least as much as older Americans. So it is not that the young don't read, it is that newspapers are not what they choose to read.

As it does every two years, the center asked a representative sample of approximately 3,000 adults detailed questions about what they had read the day before the interview. Four-in-ten (41 percent) said they had read a newspaper, more than the number who read books (34 percent) or magazines (23 percent). But the trend in newspaper reading remains negative — in 2000, 47 percent read a paper the previous day and as many as 58 percent did so in 1994.

The generation gap here is what is important. Newspapers were the most popular choice among people fifty years of age and older — 54 percent vs. 34 percent for books and 24 percent for magazines. Among the under fifties, however, as many read books as newspapers (34 percent books vs. 32 percent newspapers), while 22 percent read magazines.

On average, Americans under fifty spent eleven minutes reading a newspaper the day before the interview, nine minutes reading magazines, and eighteen minutes reading books. Older people, on average, devoted twenty-three

WHAT INTERESTS YOUNGER READERS (UNDER FIFTY) WHO READ ...

Interests	Newspapers		Only Magazines and Books	
	%		%	
Crime	32		27	
Community	34		23	
Sports	33		21	
Health	25		21	
Local gov't	26		13	
Washington	23		17	
International	25		16	
Religion	16		16	
Science/Tech	22		14	
Business	14		11	
Entertainment	15		15	
Consumer	12		6	
Culture/Arts	14		9	

minutes to newspapers, nineteen to books, and eleven to magazines.

Not surprisingly, education plays a role in these statistics. Young college graduates read more than young people with less education. But there is a gender gap that is as important as education. Younger men are more likely to be non-readers than women. But if they do read, men under fifty favor newspapers more often than women. Women in that age group prefer books to newspapers (38 percent to 30 percent). Surprisingly, the gender gap in newspaper reading has little to do with working moms or the presence of children in the household.

Newspaper readers simply express much greater interest in national and international news than young people who read other things. But it's not just an interest in hard news that attracts younger readers. Those under fifty who still read newspapers show strong interest in many of the topics that are a newspaper's bread-and-butter, such as community news, sports, culture and the arts, and consumer news.

So the challenge for newspapers is to find other subjects that push the buttons of young readers who are shunning newspapers. The good news is that almost as many of them express interest in religion, entertainment, business, and health news as newspaper readers. Many have a commitment to news — they read news magazines, watch the morning shows, and 63 percent say they wish they had more time to devote to the news. So there is an opening for newspapers to exploit.

It is no exaggeration to say that the future vitality of newspapers depends on attracting these younger readers. The new study presents a bleak demographic picture: Just a quarter of those under thirty said they read a paper the day before the survey. Less than a third of people in their thirties (30 percent) read a newspaper the previous day. Compare that with a decade ago, when 53 percent of those in their thirties said they had read a paper on the previous day. And when today's thirty-somethings were tracked back to 1991, when they were in their twenties, a far greater number (48 percent) typically read a paper.

Newspapers have seen far less fall-off among older generations. Among those now in their forties and fifties (born between 1942 and 1961) readership has decreased, but only modestly. Newspaper readership among those born before 1942 has remained relatively steady over the past eleven years, with significant declines only among those over age seventy. Newspapers have done a better job than the evening network newscasts in hanging on to their older audiences — but that is a dubious distinction. ■

What's So Crazy About A Board That Knows Journalism?



BY GENEVA OVERHOLSER

Geneva Overholser (genevaoh@aol.com), a syndicated columnist for The Washington Post Writers Group, writes regularly for CJR about newspapers. She holds an endowed chair at the University of Missouri school of journalism. Among positions she has held are editorial writer for *The New York Times*, editor of *The Des Moines Register*, and ombudsman for *The Washington Post*. She also served nine years on the Pulitzer Prize board.

Should the board of directors of a newspaper company have anything to do with the journalism in the company's newspapers? "God forbid," seems to be the sentiment among some newspaper CEOs. "Of course they should," is the view of others. This split became evident recently when nine former

newspaper editors (Hodding Carter, Bob Giles, Max King, Bill Kovach, Dave Lawrence, Jim Naughton, Gene Patterson, Gene Roberts, and I) sent a letter to chief executives and board members of the nation's fourteen largest publicly owned newspaper companies. Our hope, as we wrote, was "to encourage a re-examination by newspaper companies of the degree to which they are sustaining their commitment to journalism." We urged the executives and directors to consider several steps (see box) that seemed to us "in keeping with the unique, constitutionally protected, public-trust mission of your companies." The recommendations were drawn primarily from *Taking Stock: Journalism and the Publicly Traded Newspaper Company*, by Gilbert Cranberg, Randall Bezanson, and John Soloski, and from a speech that Peter Goldmark, chief executive officer of the *International Herald Tribune*, gave at an Aspen Institute seminar a couple of years ago.

The letters carried assurances that we took this approach in a spirit of shared convictions and without fanfare, though we might want to encourage public discussion of these issues. We invited responses. Three CEOs and the representative of a fourth wrote back. All these CEOs are respected leaders of solid newspaper companies, yet their thoughts could hardly be more varied — raising

thought-provoking questions about the role of newspaper company boards. (Some of the executives asked not to be identified, so the quotes are unattributed.)

One executive wrote that he shared our concerns, and that his company recognizes the importance of strong journalism and thus has several directors with journalism experience. Another said that, while our suggestions raised complex issues, his company "is aligned philosophically with a number of the ideas imbedded" in the suggestions and hopes our efforts "yield positive results."

Then there were the other two: "Are you guys out of your minds?" wrote one good friend of journalism. Board members should play no role in journalistic policy, he said. "They tend to be financial, legal, technology or business experts who can help a company make business progress." Another wrote that he felt his company would not be well served "by having anyone on our Board of Directors responsible for monitoring the quality of our journalism. The Board of this company knows very well that its mandate does not extend into journalism."

If the latter two views are in any way representative, it seems that the old "wall" between the newsroom and the business offices has moved. Journalism must, in essence, be protected from the board. But wait. Business literature has some differing views. Here are some examples: Boards "govern the organization by broad policies and objectives — including to assign priorities and ensure the organization's capacity to carry out programs"; boards "account to the public for the products and services of the organization"; a board "helps management develop

business plans, policy objectives and business strategy." Since the Enron collapse, concerns about corporate governance have only increased, and sentiments such as "a board's top priority is the development and implementation of a balanced philosophy concerning the corporation's constituencies" are gaining strength. The old notion that in a board's eyes the only stakeholders that count are the stockholders is on the wane.

But what about newspaper companies? The executive who found us loony suggested we "take a look at who serves on such boards." Indeed, board members do tend heavily toward financial expertise. But is that the only way to run the show? What if boards better reflected the value of the journalism to the public and indeed to democracy? What if they brought together First Amendment lawyers, political activists, civic leaders — and journalists? Mightn't journalism's place be strengthened among the companies' broad policies, priorities, capacity to carry out programs, and implementation of a balanced philosophy — to borrow a few of those biz-school phrases?

Dan Sullivan, a University of Minnesota media economist, remarked at a recent gathering at the Poynter Institute that the tension in newspaper companies these days between journalists and business leaders is not a clash of values but "a disagreement about the business we're in." We have different ideas about who the customer is, he said. Journalists believe the citizen is the customer, but as long as the advertiser foots the bill, that is an illusion. The business is about serving advertisers. Certainly, the idea that the board should focus on anything but the journalism would seem to con-

firm that. A few family-controlled companies whose leaders have journalistic responsibility bred into them may be able to focus on public service (at least at their flagships) while keeping the board away from the journalism. But what about the rest — the majority — of the companies? Couldn't making the health of the journalism one of the board's focuses — and rewarding executives for journalistic as well as financial success — offer some hope for a greater emphasis on the newspapers' responsibilities to their readers and to their communities? Dan Sullivan thinks that "the real alternative to the current situation is not a business that values profits and good journalism, but a business where good journalism is the business."

Maybe Sullivan is right. It may be that not until the customer we seek to serve becomes the one who pays will we make journalism our primary business — and something to be invested in, rather than drawn down upon. But that is a big debate, and a long way out, if it ever it comes at all. Meanwhile, a board of directors that actually cares about the journalism, and is expected to shape policies that help the whole company care about it, seems not so crazy a notion to me. ■

Recommendations For Corporate Boards

1 Boards of directors of newspaper companies should have among their outside directors one or more members with experience on the editorial side of a news organization. Outside directors with editorial backgrounds should be represented on board compensation committees.

2 The board should designate a director to have special responsibility to monitor the quality of the company's editorial performance. The director so designated preferably should be a member of the compensation committee.

As an alternative, a committee on editorial quality should be established, said committee to work closely with the compensation committee.

3 Incentive compensation for corporate management should be tied in significant part to achieving journalistic quality goals. Boards should establish criteria for judging quality, and these may be both objective (e.g., circulation, newshole) and subjective criteria, the latter preferably after consultation with experienced non-employee as well as in-house journalists. Judgments concerning the extent to which the criteria are met should take into account the views of journalism professionals and knowledgeable readers in the relevant communities.

These judgments should figure importantly in the compensation of local publishers, editors, and key editorial employees. Newsroom bonuses should be rewarded exclusively for achieving journalism-related objectives. Stock options should not be part of the compensation package of editorial employees. Nor should stock options constitute all or part of directors' fees.

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Naming the Problem

BY ERIKA KINETZ

Karin Dickson lived on the same calm and leafy block of Park Slope, Brooklyn, for twenty-nine years. On March 7, 2000, she vanished. I came to know her about a year later. She stared out at me from a slightly worn color Xerox, a dark-haired woman with pixilated blue eyes. Her mouth was set in the vague intimation of a smile.

"Our Mother MISSING," read the flier. The bubbled block print described one Karin Luise Dickson, a fifty-nine-year old, five-foot tall, ninety-pound woman with scar tissue around her jaw and a gap between her front teeth. "She is very ill," the flier continued. "We are trying to bring her home."

At the bottom were the names and phone numbers of two of her daughters, Sandra and Sherry, and, finally, an exhortation: "Leave message on cell #'s above. PLEASE!!" I called Sandra and Sherry and spent the next seven months entangled with the Dickson family, working on an article about the daughters' search for their missing mother, a story that would eventually remind me again of how journalism's power sometimes has its limits.

The mystery of what it might mean to vanish is what drew me in, but the family's frankness is what kept me with them. Their past lives came to me in fragments, a wild, sad mosaic of abandonment, paranoia, and dreams of a happy ever-after. There was something unnerving yet recognizable about the ease with which incomprehensible things coexisted with comprehensible ones. "She literally dragged me out by the hair," came out in the same tone of voice as a comment about the weather.

Somewhere amid the neatly tended flower boxes of brownstone Brooklyn, Karin Dickson lost her mind. By March 2000, when she was evicted for lighting dozens of candles in her apartment in her refusal to use electricity, Karin and her daughters barely spoke.

Karin did not want help. She learned to sleep on benches. She watched the birds. Her old neighbors spotted her here and there on the streets and in the cafés, but her daughters and I were always one step behind. Then, in March 2001, after fifty-four weeks on the street, one of Karin's old neighbors spotted her in lower Manhattan. The cops came and took her to Bellevue Hospital, where she was diagnosed and treated for schizophrenia. She was still carrying her house keys.

Karin agreed to meet with me and a photographer for an interview last August, at a diner near the mental institution in Orangeburg, New York, where she had been staying. She wore a pair of immaculate white oxfords, their tongues turned down. Outside, there was a gentle, late summer rain, as unassuming and slight as the woman herself. We ordered coffee. Karin's hands shook. She said she wanted her freedom back.

Unwittingly, as I researched my story, I had become this family's confessor, their witness. I felt responsible — and utterly inadequate. It was not, after all, my job to intervene. My story ran on September 9. Two days later Karin's tragedy was swal-



lowed by the larger grief of the terrorist attacks. Still, I harbored a small and secret belief that by shedding a little light on this lost woman, something would give.

It didn't.

The next time I saw Karin Dickson she was dead. Her remains lay in a shiny black box at the Joseph G. Duffy funeral home in Park Slope. About thirty people showed up for her funeral on March 15. They passed around copies of my article. Something should be done, they said, nodding gravely at me, as if I had the power — and thus the responsibility — to right the wrongs of an overworked social system. The priest recited his lines about the valley of darkness. The heat was oppressive.

It was the wrong ending to the story.

She had been found. We had singled her out from the great gray current of human suffering that slips through this city's streets. We had written over her anonymity, and now she was Karin — a woman with an Elvis collection and a bad coffee habit. She had pride, self-righteousness, and high-heeled shoes.

But last August, shortly after I finally met her, Karin was transferred to Seaport Manor, an adult home in Brooklyn that had been cited four times by the State Department of Health for substandard care. Seven months later she died. The cause is still unknown.

In April the *Times* published an investigative series by Clifford Levy documenting neglect and unexamined deaths at many of the city's adult homes. Seaport Manor was among the worst offenders. Soon the governor proposed initiatives to reform the system and the gubernatorial candidates proposed counter-initiatives.

But Karin was gone. For me, her death brought home again a frustrating lesson I keep trying to resist — that just because you name something doesn't mean you can make it better. ■

Erika Kinetz writes for the city section of The New York Times.

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